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SACRIFICE IN THE R̥GVEDA

(ITS NATURE, INFLUENCE, ORIGIN AND GROWTH)

ऋतस्य पन्थां न तरन्ति दुष्कृतः ।

(Rv. IX.73.6)

By

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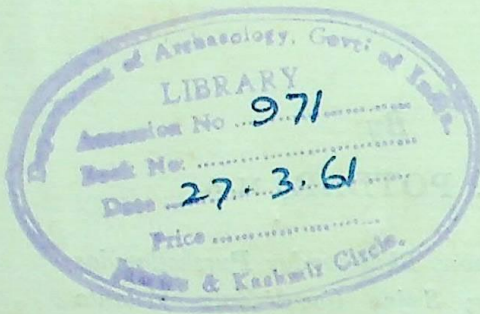
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FOREWORD

We have great pleasure in publishing as Vol. 16 of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Bharatiya Vidya Series, the valuable research work of Prof. K. R. Potdar on "Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda (Its nature, influence, origin and growth)." It is based on a minute analysis of the hymns of the Ṛgveda and deals with the problem of the Sacrifice in an entirely original way. It deals with the 'Sacrifice' in pre-brahmanic stage and its influence on the evolution of the Aryan Civilization.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,
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J. H. DAVE
Hon. Registrar.

FOREWORD

We have great pleasure in publishing as Vol. 10 of the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of India*, the valuable research work of Prof. K. S. Puri on "The Origin and Growth of the Indian Religion". It is based on a critical analysis of the hymns of the Rigveda and deals with the problem of the origin of the Indian religion. It deals with the question of the origin of the Indian religion and its influence on the evolution of the Indian religion.

J. N. DAVIS
Hon. Secretary

Asiatic Society of India
2, 11, 2003
Calcutta
January 1

PREFACE

आवाल्यादर्चितां देवीमेकनिष्ठेन चेतसा ।

‘आर्च’ प्रस्तावयन् ‘यज्ञं’ वन्दे भूयः सरस्वतीम् ॥

नदीमुखेनेव समुद्रमाविशत् । (रघु० III. 28)

While trying to understand a simile in the seventh maṇḍala (VII. 2-5cd),¹ in the course of teaching the maṇḍala to the M.A. students in 1942, I had to take up the consideration of the ‘devīḥ dvārah’ in the Āprī hymns, which further led to the study of the Āprī hymns as a group. The outcome of that study (1943) was published in the form of a paper in the Journal of the University of Bombay 1945-46, with a portion of it contributed earlier as a paper to the All India Oriental Conference at Benares. It is this study that opened up the question of the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda, some remarks about which I had got to make in the course of that study.

Though I was urged to undertake the study in all its aspects by some scholars, I could not do so till 1951, except writing a few papers concerning the topic as follows:

(1) Āprī hymn in the Atharvaveda,² (2) Agni and the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda,³ (3) Sacrificial setting of the philosophical hymns in the Ṛgveda,⁴ (4) Ṛbhus in the Ṛgvedic sacrifice.⁵ The problem however was shaping more clearly in my mind and hence I decided to work it out in full. The results obtained have been incorporated in the present work.

It may not be out of place to note here that ever since I was initiated into the study of the Ṛgveda by my Guru Prof. H. D. Velankar (then of the Wilson College) in 1930, I have continuously been in touch with the study of the Ṛgveda and though I could not have the good fortune of receiving his guidance, being out of Bombay on account of the service conditions, I have no hesitation in placing on record the inspiration for the Ṛgvedic studies, I have derived from him. It need not be added that for the shortcomings that may have crept into my work, I am entirely responsible.

As a keen student of the Vedānta, I have watched the efforts of the veteran Acharyas Bādarāyaṇa and Śaṅkara, to explain every

1. Vide AHR (appendix), B.U.J. 1946.

2. PAIOC (Nagpur 1946) published in 1951.

3. Paper read at the AIOC, Bombay 1946.

4. Paper contributed to the Sanskrit Viśva Pariṣad at Somnath and published in Bharatiya Vidya 1952.

5. Paper for AIOC at Lucknow 1951, published B.U.J. 1952.

SACRIFICE IN THE ṚGVEDA

point of philosophical importance on the basis of the Upaniṣads and that has obviously influenced me in undertaking studies in various fields. Thus besides the paper on the Āpri hymns, referred to above, in two other papers written earlier (1) Contemporary life as revealed in the works of Bāṇa⁶ and (2) The role of the Gītā in life,⁷ I have followed the same method of understanding a work primarily on the basis of the internal evidence and making every remark on the basis of the statements available in the work concerned. It is thus that the caption 'nāmūlaṁ likhyate kiñcit' (Mallinātha) was significantly chosen for the paper on Bāṇa, which is equally applicable to the present work as well. It will be seen that all the inferences regarding the sacrifice have been drawn on the basis of the hymns of the Ṛgveda, though there can be a difference of opinion regarding some of them. Though some of the conclusions thus arrived at may not appear to be quite definite, this line of investigation has its own merits. It may further be noted that in drawing the inferences from the statements in a work, sympathetic imagination has always got a role to play. It will be for scholars to judge how far I have been able to employ it successfully in my work.

After a close contact with the study of the Ṛgveda for the purposes of teaching or otherwise for more than twenty years, I have a feeling that I know something about the spirit of the Ṛgveda and it is mainly under that inspiration that I have been prompted to undertake this study. I have had a very clear conscience of having undertaken and executed my job with perfect sincerity and honesty of purpose. Self-satisfaction is however no satisfaction as indicated by Kālidāsa in introducing the Śākuntala (v.2 'ā paritoṣād viduṣāṁ na sādhu manye...') and hence in the words of the Kavikulaguru himself, I may place these results before the world of scholars, viz., 'taṁ santaḥ śrotumarhanti sadasadvakti-hetavaḥ' (Raghu, I. 10).

I have to perform a very pleasant duty of placing on record my sincere thanks to various individuals and institutions who have been of help to me directly or indirectly in the course of the progress of my work, right upto its publication.

The work is seeing the light of the day so early because of the fact that the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has undertaken its publication. My sincere thanks are due to the Bhavan and particularly its Hon. Registrar Prof. J. H. Dave, who has shown very keen interest in the results achieved herein and consequently taken an initiative in undertaking its publication.

6. Awarded the V. N. Mandlik Gold Medal and Prize by the Bombay University 1939; published in the B.U.J. 1942-44.

7. Awarded the T. Munshi Gold Medal by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in 1946; published in the Bharatiya Vidya Collection, Varanasi, 1949.

My thanks are also due to all the scholars whose works I have had the privilege of referring to and who have enlightened me and occasionally spurred me on in my work. All the scholar friends whom I had an occasion to talk to about the plan of the present work, have shown very keen interest in it and this has also helped me in pursuing my work enthusiastically. For going through a portion of the Mss., I have to thank (1) Prof. H. D. Velankar, Joint Director, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, (2) Prof. R. P. Kangle, Professor of Sankrit, Elphinstone College and (3) Prof. K. R. Mahishi, my colleague at the Ismail College. Dr. Balse of the Elphinstone College has been kind enough to translate a portion from Prof. Renou's book, which was kindly lent by Dr. S. M. Katre, Director, Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, Poona. Four of my students at the Karnatak College, Dharwar have been of some help to me in one way or the other in the course of the publication of this work. My best wishes go to them as they have done their bit out of a sense of duty. They are (1) Miss T. S. Kulkarni, M.A., (2) B. R. Modak, M.A., (3) Shri N. G. Kulkarni, B.A., (Hons.) and (4) Shri S. H. Ritti, M.A. Shri Ritti has helped me in reading through the Mss., attending the press, correcting the proofs and if it were not for his vigilant eye that many a slip would have crept into the work. The compilation of indices has been mainly his work.

I have done most of my work in the inspiring atmosphere of the Bombay University Library, whose authorities and staff I have to thank for extending to me all facilities required for my work.

I should also thank the management and the staff of the Associated Advertisers and Printers, Ltd. for the excellent cooperation extended by them in getting the work ready in time.

D/5, Sharadashram,
Bombay 28.
Vijayādaśamī,
17th October 1953.

K. R. POTDAR.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AB — Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
ABI — Aitareya Brāhmaṇa Introduction.
ABORI — Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
AHR — Āprī Hymns in the Ṛgveda: a study and a theory.
AIOC — All India Oriental Conference.
Anuk. — Sarvānukramaṇī of the Ṛgveda.
ASL — Ancient Sanskrit Literature.
Ath. — Atharvaveda.
B.U.J. — Bombay University Journal.
Bṛhad — Bṛhaddevatā.
B.V. — Bhāratiya Vidyā.
ERE — Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.
ERP — Essays on the Religion of the Parsis.
HIL — History of Indian Literature.
HRG — Hymns of the Ṛgveda (Translation) by Griffith.
HSL — History of Sanskrit Literature—Vedic Period.
JBBRAS — Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
LEV — Les Ecoles Vediques et La formation du Veda.
Ni — Nirukta of Yāska.
PAIOC — Proceedings of the All India Oriental Conference.
Raghu — Raghuvamśa.
RBV — Ṛgvedāntila Bhaktimārga.
RGL — Role of the Gītā in life.
Ṛgveda — Der Ṛgveda.
RIH — Religions of India—Hopkins.
RLH — Rituell Litteratur—Hillebrandt.
RPV — Religion and Philosophy of the Veda.
RRB — Ṛgveda Repetitions—Bloomfield.
RRG — The Religion of the Ṛgveda—Griswold.
Rv. — Ṛgveda-Saṁhitā.
RVB — The Religion of the Veda—Bloomfield.
RVL — Religion in Vedic Literature.
RVO — Religion des Veda—Oldenberg.

- Ś. — Śākuntala.
Sām — Sāmaveda samhitā.
Sāy — Sāyaṇācārya.
SRL — Sanskrit Reader—Lanmann.
U.R. — Uttararāmacarita.
V.H. — Vedic Hymns—S. B. E. Series.
V.I. — Vedic Index.
Ved. Stu. — Vedische Studien.
Vel. — Indra Hymns (translated) Velankar.
VMH — Vedische Mythologie—Hillebrandt.
VMM — Vedic Mythology—Macdonell.
Vs — Vājasaneyī Samhitā.
Wort — Worterbuch zum Ṛgveda.

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Chapter One

DĪKṢĀ—INITIATORY REMARKS

ब्रह्म वरं ममान्तरम् । (RV. VI. 75-19)

मन्त्रश्रुत्यं चरामसि । (RV. X. 134-7)

SYNOPSIS :—

Circumstances characterizing the beginning and evolution of sacrifice cannot be fully known for want of the necessary evidence—sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇas and the Śrauta literature in its advanced stage—later growth in theoretical aspect—difference in the relationship between the Brāhmaṇas and the Śrauta literature, as well as, between the Ṛgveda and the Brāhmaṇa literature—reason—a broad analogy—impossibility of filling up the chronological gap, which must have affected the growth of the idea—gap even in the stratas of the hymns in the Ṛgveda indicated—chronological fallacy to judge the Ṛgvedic sacrifice from the Brāhmaṇa literature—emphasis on mythology while writing about religion—relation between the mythological and sacrificial ideas indicated—mythology and sacrifice, two aspects of religion—Views of scholars—Max Muller granting historical and literary character of the Ṛgveda and the chronological gap but applying Brāhmaṇa ritual to Āpī hymns—Dr. M. Haug considering RV. collection to be more mythological in character—attempting to show the ritual to be the same as in the Brāhmaṇas or remaining unchanged for more than two thousand years—Bloomfield's view—Prof. A. A. Macdonell—magic character of Ṛgvedic sacrifice—for want of evidence believes the ritual to be the same as that in the Brāhmaṇas—C. V. Vaidya agreeing with Macdonell—Griswold making some superficial observations—Dr. Keith accepting in part Macdonell's view—Ritual similarities with Avesta indicated as not very significant for the same reason—Keith disagreeing with Haug regarding the animal sacrifice—believes the ritual of the Ṛgveda to be considerably elaborate—Dr. P. S. Deshmukh criticising the magical basis of the Ṛgvedic religion—agrees with Macdonell and Keith regarding the developed form of the ritual for want of sufficient evidence—

Prof. Renou's view about the ritualistic version of the Ṛksamhitā—views of Oldenberg, Bergaigne and Hillebrandt indicated—similarities in ritual possibly due to adaptation—in general, considers the ritual of the Sūtras to be different from that of the Ṛgveda—reference to the view of Barth regarding the Āpī hymns—

Points of vital importance for the consideration of the present problem indicated—two reasons for the divergence of the views of different scholars—vague idea about the continuity of the ritual—pointed as incorrect—hymns characterized by a freshness—Bloomfield's view regarding the hymns being meant for sacrifice criticized—basic idea in hymns to propitiate the divinity—simplicity of ritual at an earlier stage accepted—gradual growth not generally appreciated—mechanical performance and genuine poetry incompatible with each other—genuine poetry *made* to serve the cause of sacrifice—relative position indicated by a metaphor—for want of other contemporary evidence, the hymns, the only reliable evidence—method indicated—analysis of all the data regarding the sacrifice—an inherent shortcoming—still the validity of the present evidence indicated—restriction of scope to the hymns of the Ṛgveda—its advantage—comparison with later literature for later development—topics under which the present problem is discussed.

The circumstances that characterized the beginning of the institution of sacrifice in the ancient Aryan society and the forces that combined to evolve it through well-marked stages must, to some extent, remain a secret, that cannot be completely probed into for want of all the necessary evidence, which for obvious reasons, can never become available to us. The available evidence is recorded in the literary monuments of the earliest period *viz.*, the so-called Śruti and its accessory literature. The sacrifice elaborately discussed in the Brāhmaṇa literature, finds further elaboration and supplementation in the Śrauta and the gṛhya literature. This, combined with the bias of theoretical discussion, attained its climax in the evolution of a system of thought, popularly known as the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā system. Thus it is in the light of the theory and practice of sacrifice as found in this vast literature that different scholars have described the so-called vedic sacrifice.

It is true that the system of sacrifice attained such rigidity in its practical aspect in the days of the Brāhmaṇas, that it was not likely to undergo any further change in the centuries that followed. It was so for the obvious reason that its fruitfulness was linked up with its rigid performance and it was mainly for this reason that the system has developed in its theoretical aspect in the later days. But what is true of the relationship of the Brāhmaṇa literature on the one hand and the later Śrauta literature on the other, cannot necessarily be true about the hymns of the R̥gveda on the one hand and the Brāhmaṇa literature on the other. Because, the divine origin of the Mantra and Brāhmaṇa literature is a later conception, which compelled the later writers to abide by every single syllable of the Śrutis, while the authors of the Brāhmaṇas were not so bound by the wording of the R̥gveda. As far as the R̥gveda is concerned, the authors talk of 'carving out' the hymns (1.61.4, 1.171.2, V.2.11, etc.). Hence, though we can draw fairly valid inferences about the sacrifices in the days of the Brāhmaṇas from the material preserved in the later Śrauta literature, the same cannot be held true about the sacrifices in the days of the hymns of the R̥gveda from the material preserved in the Brāhmaṇa literature, which was apparently separated from the date of the composition of the R̥gvedic hymns by several centuries. This is because the sacrifice can be noticed to be undergoing evolution in the hymns of the R̥gveda, while it has attained its full growth in the days of the Brāhmaṇas. This can be further inferred from the description of different sacrificial rites in the different Brāhmaṇa works, a comparative study of which will reveal the fact that the varying traditions are sought to be brought in a line, with differences ironed out and the whole presented as a smoothened and polished fabric.¹ Employing a broad analogy, it

1. Cf. V.M.H. Vol. III, pp. 211, 297, 322, where he is trying to point out how the Śrauta literature came to be codified and forwards his theory (p. 298) *viz.*

can be said that what Pāṇini's Grammar (Aṣṭādhyāyī) did for the Sanskrit language, the Brāhmaṇa literature has done for the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda. Continuing the analogy, it will be true to say that just as Pāṇini's grammar takes into account the language as it was known in his days, so also does the Brāhmaṇa literature discuss the sacrifice as it was known in its days. Even granting some scope for a broad tradition, it will have to be admitted that the Brāhmaṇas are chronologically so much separated from the hymns of the Ṛgveda, that the sacrifice cannot be believed to have remained at a standstill during the long period that elapsed between the earliest compositions of the hymns and the earliest Brāhmaṇa literature describing the sacrifice. This chronological gap cannot be filled by any stretch of imagination to whatever extent one may attempt to do so. Even the composition and collection of hymns have spread over such a long stretch of time, that the hymns have started becoming unintelligible at places, even to those people, who have grown in that tradition. Thus the author of X.71, saying that a number of people cannot perceive the meaning (*v.4 uta tvaḥ paśyanna dadarśa vācam, uta tvaḥ śṛṇvanna śṛṇotyenām*), refers to a limited few, who could understand the same (*uta tvasmai tanvaṁ visasre*). They appear to be the persons, who were actively connected with the sacrifice as suggested at x. 71-3 (*yajñena vācaḥ padaviyamāyan*). The statement is interesting inasmuch as it refers to a stage, where the hymns could be understood only through association with the sacrificial performances, whereas in the early stages, the sacrifice must have grown with the help of these hymns (cf. Chapter II). Thus, when the stretch of time is so long, it can be realised that the ideas in general must have been undergoing a change, consequent upon the change in the social structure, ushered in by the course of time in addition to various other factors. As the hymns have passed through various stages² in the course of their composition and compilation, the same inference about the sacrifice so intimately associated with them, becomes quite inevitable.

In fact, it must be said with special emphasis that it will be a 'chronological fallacy' to draw inferences about the Ṛgvedic sacrifice from the evidence of the Brāhmaṇa literature. When ideas about social relationship, religion and philosophy have to be understood as growing through the different periods of the Ṛgveda and the Brāhmaṇa literature, it cannot be justifiably said that the ideas about

Śrauta ritual is a compromise, an artificial product of a number of usages previously existing.

2. This can be evident from the arrangement of the hymns in the family Maṇḍalas in the descending order, breach of the descending order at the end of the group, the family Ṛṣi hymns occurring in the other Maṇḍalas (see chapter VII), their non-inclusion in the family maṇḍalas, separation of Soma hymns in the 9th Maṇḍala and still the occurrence of some 'Soma' hymns in the other Maṇḍalas, symmetrically exact number of hymns in the first and the tenth Maṇḍalas and the literary principle underlying the collection.

sacrifice have remained the same without undergoing any change whatsoever during the days of the hymns as well as after.

A large number of scholars have written about the religious and mythological conceptions of the Aryans as revealed in the hymns of the R̥gveda. Mythological and religious speculations have naturally become a fascinating study on account of the evolution of the science of Comparative Mythology and Religion, which attracted various scholars to write about the allied topics of Mythology and Religion. It is true that the religious ideas were dominated by mythological speculations and as such have come to be discussed with right emphasis. But sacrifice—the connecting link between the two—has not received the attention it deserved. It can be realised that sacrifice must have influenced the growth of the mythological and religious speculations of the time. The idea and practice of sacrifice cannot be understood as evolving in an isolated sphere, disconnected from the field of mythological and religious ideas. In a way the mythology of the R̥gveda can be said to be the theoretical aspect of the R̥gvedic religion, while sacrifice to be the practical aspect of the same. Therefore a correct evaluation of the religious ideas cannot possibly be arrived at unless adequate consideration is given to both the theoretical and practical aspects—the mythology and the sacrifice.³ Without proper appreciation of the sacrifice in the R̥gveda, the exposition of the religion of the R̥gveda can only be a half-truth. That is precisely what we come across in the majority of works on the subject, which contain mainly the treatment of mythology with some scrappy remarks about the sacrifice.

Even among the scholars, who have written in some detail on the subject of sacrifice, one comes across a wide divergence of opinions, caused by a bewildering variety of reasons.

Thus Max-Muller, discussing some of the sacrificial hymns and the mention of the names of priests in the R̥gveda⁴ remarks (p. 259), "Passages like these do not necessitate, the admission of a full-grown ceremonial, they only point to its natural beginnings." Writing about III.28 he says, "it would hardly have been written except by some pious priests, brought up under the system of Brāhmanic ceremonial" (p. 260). In a general way he admits the chronological gap between the R̥gveda Samhitā and the Brāhmaṇa literature (p. 243). "It belongs to a period previous to the complete ascendancy of the Brāhmaṇas; it was finished before the threefold ceremonial had been worked out in all its details."⁵ About a large majority of

3. ERE, Vol. XII, p. 601. Macdonell "Religion means on the one hand the beliefs entertained by men regarding the divine or supernatural powers and on the other, that sense of dependence on those powers which is expressed by act in the form of ritual and sacrifice"; RVL—Deshmukh p. 18.

4. ASL, pp. 246-262

5. Cf. also p. 252. "We may therefore not completely enslaved by a system of mere formalities."

hymns in the Ṛgvedic collection, he says, (p. 247) "Not only is the order of the hymns completely independent of the order of the sacrifices, but there are numerous hymns in our collection, which could never have been used at any sacrifice" and "The Ṛgveda is not a Veda for the Hotṛ priest, in the same sense, in which the Sāman and the Yajurvedas are for the Udgātṛ and the Adhvaryu priests." Writing about the Āprī hymns however, he prefers to agree with their employment according to the Brāhmaṇas and say that, (p. 245) "Āprī hymn is a hymn, which had to be recited by the Hotṛ priest, previous to the immolation of certain victims,"⁶ without assigning any convincing reason for doing so.

Dr. M. Haug⁷ remarks, "It took, no doubt, many centuries before the endless number of rites and ceremonies and their bewildering complications could form themselves into such a system of sacrificial rules as we find already exhibited in the Brāhmaṇas", but maintains that even in the days of the Ṛgveda, "not only the whole of 'Kalpa' was settled, save some minor points, but even the symbolical and mystical meanings of the majority of rites". Thus according to him the Brahmanical sacrifices were already developed and almost complete at the time of the composition of the hymns of the Ṛgveda and that the hymns "presuppose a settled ritual" (p. 9).⁸ On the analogy of the Avesta⁹ apparently, he has presumed that the number of the priests in the beginning must have been two and that the earlier performance was of a simple animal or soma sacrifice (p. 13). This appears to have been necessitated by his other assumption that the Aśvamedha hymn (I. 162) belongs to the early period of sacrifice (p. 23). His attempt to prove it is based on the specious ground that, "we find religious poetry precede the profane songs in the history of poetry" (p. 29). All sacrificial hymns may not be late hymns as he contends but that does not necessarily justify his inference about the very early character of the Aśvamedha hymn nor about the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas being 'settled' at the time of the Ṛgveda.

It is interesting to observe him say that "the first sacrifices were no doubt very simple" (p. 30) and that "at the most ancient times, it appears that all the sacrificial formulas were spoken by the Hotṛ alone" (p. 31) but at the same time maintain (p. 31) that "the ritual which appears to have been in force for the last three thousand years without undergoing any considerable change" and that (p. 36) "the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas in its main features was almost com-

6. Cf. Potdar—"Āprī hymns", (B.U.J. 1945).

7. ABI 1863. p. 7.

8. The same point is differently stated at pp. 11, 12, 47.

9. ERP—Haug. pp. 267-86.

plete at the time when the principle Ṛṣis such as the Kaṇva lived".¹⁰

This presumption has led him to postulate that "There can hardly be any doubt that the oldest hymns we possess are purely sacrificial and made only for sacrificial purposes" and that "those which express more general ideas or philosophical thoughts are comparatively late" (p. 39).

Wrong premises regarding the relationship between the Ṛgvedic hymns and the Brāhmanical sacrifice have seriously jeopardised the validity of his conclusions in spite of all the elaborate and scholarly discussions which clearly bear the stamp of his deep study.

Bloomfield¹¹ has made some significant statements about the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda in a very general way without adducing much evidence for the same. Thus he remarks (p. 182) "Sacrifice with its ceremonial formalities is the epidermis of the Vedic Religion." At another place (p. 65), he says, "Sacrifice is the dominant note of Vedic life"; or (p. 31) "The Ṛgveda presupposes a tolerably elaborate and not uninteresting ritual."

He thinks that the ritual of the Ṛgveda is different from that of the other Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas (p. 75). "The Ṛgveda begins with a form of worship, neither as extensive nor as formal and rigid as the technical ritual of the Yajurveda and the Brāhmaṇas." Writing about the Āprī hymns he says, "If we had before us the ritual practices, which accompanied the Ṛgvedic hymns at the time of their composition, the Ṛgveda would lose much of obscurity."¹²

He discusses some of the verbal similarities with the Avesta and, in general, recognises the importance of dealing with the sacrifice in the discussion of religion. But as he believes the Ṛgvedic collection to be largely mythological in character,¹³ it appears that he does not expect the Ṛgvedic hymns to give much information regarding the sacrifice and hence has emphasized the 'mythology' aspect of religion in his book, though recognising the importance of the sacrifice for the discussion of religion.

Macdonell has written at length on the topic of the Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda.¹⁴ Assuming the Ṛgveda ritual to be the same as the Brāhmaṇa ritual, he says, "The ritual which the hymns of the Ṛgveda were intended to accompany and which is fully described in the other Vedic texts, is, though carried out by sacrificial priests, from beginning to end saturated with magical observances." (p. 312).

10. Cf. also p. 47. "The whole ritual complete".

11. The Religion of the Veda 1908.

12. Ṛgveda Repetitions, Vol. I, p. 18.

13. Introduction p. iv and 81. "In its essence, the Ṛgveda is not liturgy, but mythology."

14. ERE, Vol VIII, pp. 311-321. Vol. XII, pp. 610-612. For discussion of his views on magic cf. Chapter X below.

His view regarding the Vedic sacrifice being magical in character is apparently based on some of the tendencies displayed in the Brāhmaṇas. What Dr. Deshmukh¹⁵ says of Oldenberg is also true of Macdonell, *viz.*, that he fails to make a clear distinction between the period of the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā and that of the other Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. This would be obvious from what he says at (*ERE* XII p. 613), "Our knowledge of the recurrent sacrifices is derived from the ritual literature, for there are only few and obscure traces of them in the hymns of the Ṛgveda, which is almost exclusively concerned with the soma sacrifice. It is however probable that they were performed at least in their main features during the earliest Vedic period." Thus he believes that the Ṛgvedic hymns cannot give any idea of the sacrifice and as such feels that the later sacrificial literature gives almost correctly the idea of the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda.

Among those, who agree with Macdonell in holding this view can be mentioned C. V. Vaidya¹⁶ and Griswold¹⁷ who says, "The ritual of the Brāhmaṇas was clearly continuous with that of the Ṛgveda" (p. 336). M. Winternitz refers¹⁸ to the two extreme views in this regard, Kaegi¹⁹ holding that the Ṛgvedic hymns are mainly poetical and Oldenberg²⁰ holding that they are ritualistic in character.

Keith²¹ accepts the latter point in Macdonell's view as he remarks, "The imperfection of the record of the Ṛgveda renders it necessary in any account of the Vedic ritual, to deal with the ritual, as it stands in the later Saṃhitās and the Brāhmaṇas." He discusses similarities in the ritual terms of the Ṛgveda and the Avesta²² and regarding the nature of the ritual in the Ṛgveda, concludes, "The question of the primitive sacrifice is clearly insoluble since among certain similarities, there are great differences of view" (p. 40).

It is true in a great measure that inferences about the ritual practices in the Ṛgveda cannot be drawn on the evidence of Avesta to any reliable extent, for the same reason as the Brāhmaṇas cannot become adequate guides for the Ṛgvedic ritual *viz.* the chronological gap that separates the two and the possibility of the consequent changes in the ritual performances. He however appears to realise in a general way, what Roth and Max Muller have referred to as historical character of the Ṛgveda collection. It presumes, as Max Muller has pointed out, the chronological priority of the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā *cf.* (p. 15). "We find, indeed, once more that only as a

15. RVL, p. 57.

16. HSL, I, p. 144.

17. RRG, p. 336, 337.

18. HIL, Vol I, p. 72

19. Ṛgveda—Kaegi.

20. RVO, p. 3.

21. RPV, p. 256.

22. P. 34-35.

historical rather than a liturgical collection is the condition of the R̥gveda logically explicable."

Unlike Haug, he thinks that the animal sacrifice must have been later and that it is not at all prominent in the R̥gvedic collection cf. (p. 13): "The collectors of the hymns in the main were interested in the Soma ritual and the great majority of the hymns deal with some form or the other of that rite; the animal sacrifice is hardly noticed, save in the case of the most important and rare Aśvamedha sacrifice."

Thus even though he believes the earlier sacrifice to be a simpler one, the mention of a number of priests at places, has led him to conclude (p. 16) "Already in the R̥gveda, there are signs of considerable elaboration of ritual and of the employment of a number of priests at the sacrifice."

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh²³ has discussed in detail the question of the basis of the R̥gvedic religion in general. Regarding the nature of sacrifice in the R̥gveda,²⁴ he appears to agree with Prof. Macdonell when he remarks, (p. 339) "The R̥gveda itself supplies us with scanty information of the actual forms of sacrifice current in that period. It is however very probable that the various forms of the Soma sacrifices of the later times, together with the production and the establishing of fires (Agnyādhāna) . . . were known."

After referring to various words and places where points of sacrificial importance are mentioned, he arrives at the conclusion of a developed form of sacrifice in the days of the R̥gveda, agreeing with Keith, whom he quotes (p. 341) "The specialisation of the ritual is as old as the Indo-Iranian period."

His discussion about the basis of the religion in general including the ritual practices is quite significant. Referring to the view of Oldenberg,²⁵ regarding the existence of magic in the Indian tradition as India cannot be an exception, he says that it is "an anthropological fallacy" to say so and points out the one great drawback of Oldenberg: (pp. 57-58) "Oldenberg fails to make a clear distinction between the period of the R̥gveda and the later Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. If the distinction is not made, it may be true to say that the Vedic ritual is overgrown with magical practices." Thus he appears to have realised that the non-appreciation of the chronological gap between the R̥gveda Saṁhitā, the Brāhmaṇa and the other Śrauta works is apt to lead to wrong conclusions regarding the nature of the idea of religion in the R̥gveda; still, he does not appear to be indicating the necessity of applying the same principle to determine the nature of the sacrifice in the R̥gveda.

23. Religion in Vedic Literature 1933.

24. Op. cit. 339-343.

25. Die Religion des Veda, p. 476 ff.

He does not apparently agree with the view of Keith who believes that we need not make much of the chronological distinction,²⁶ as in a general way "the literature of the Vedic period, shows emphatically no break of any kind in culture" (p. 12); still he accepts the view of Keith regarding the developed nature of sacrifice as seen above.²⁷

It is clear therefore that mainly because of the want of sufficient data, regarding the nature of the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda, he has adopted the general conclusions regarding the nature of sacrifice as stated by Dr. Keith. His conclusions, regarding the basic facts about the Ṛgvedic religion, are quite significant.²⁸

Professor L. Renou, discussing the possibility of the existence of the ritualistic version of the Ṛksamhitā²⁹ as contemporaneous if not anterior to the present Samhitā, makes the following observations:

(pp. 3-4) "When the Ṛksamhitā was collected or at least when its elements were formed, there neither existed the Yajus nor the Sāma collections. This collection, which appears at first sight, an anthology of hymns, without definite value, was in itself its own Sāmaveda and in some measure, its own Yajurveda (cf. for similar remarks, Oldenberg; ZDMG XXXVIII p. 441). He further refers to the views of Bergaigne (p. 6), who "developing some ideas of Ludwig, thought that one would be able to explain vast groups of hymns as a function of some subsequent ritual." Oldenberg had also started to do so simultaneously (ZDMG XLII). However the more recent researches of Oldenberg (Noten III-26, 28,52; ZDMG LXXI p. 323) and Geldner have preserved only a part of these concordances. Bergaigne (J. as 1889; p. 15) has referred to some Śāstras in Gāyatrī in the Ṛgveda. Prof. Renou however does not agree with this view as he remarks (p. 4) "The Ṛksamhitā is in no way reducible to Yajurvedic literature, if for nothing else, than by the total absence of Yajus and of related forms. In other words, with its historical or literary character, it could not lend itself directly to the practice of the worship unless we admit religious habits, quite different from those, which distinguish Vedism."

He criticizes the view by pointing out (p. 5) "It is clear in fact that the sequence of the nuptial or funeral prayers is partly arbitrary and that the modifications, introduced in it by the treatises are justified by the experience of the ceremonial. But it has not at all followed from that, that these treatises, have in some way before them, a samhitā, arranged for the completion of the ceremonies in the same manner as the Yajus Samhitā What was possible

26. RPV, pp. 252-56.

27. For his view regarding some hymns being non-ritualistic. Cf. RVL, p. 332 and Chapter XI below.

28. RVL, p. 45; for quite the contrary view, cf. Macdonell: ERE, Vol. VIII, p. 313.

29. Les Ecoles Vediques—Renou.

in the tradition of the Yajus, in which one had to deal with the disconnected formulae, was not at all necessary in the *Ṛksamhitā*, where the hymns, with strong structures prevailed. If it had accredited itself to a ritual recension, what need one would have had, for maintaining parallelly a literary *Samhitā*? And why should the former have disappeared when the liturgic collection (viz. the *Brāhmaṇa* literature) has been faithfully preserved? In short, there might have been an oral cadre of those hymns, sometimes strongly differentiated, but no recension. It is not by chance that the applications are particularly precise for the tenth *Maṇḍala*, for the Appendix and the *Khila* hymns. It is the sign of a kind of ritual intrusion, a new anxiety for paring which was very far from the thought of the *Ṛsis*."

Then further pointing out that the question is connected with the ritual contemporaneous with the *Ṛksamhitā*, he refers to the view of Bergaigne, who tried to explain the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* as exponent of the subsequent ritual, that of Hillebrandt, who expounds the notion of the "Lost ritual"³⁰ ("Ritual Perdu"), as also of Barth (*OEuvres* I. p. 367), who says, "The liturgy of the ritual works is no longer the liturgy of the hymns. This is a great fact that dominates all the resemblances of details."

Then proceeding to explain some ritual similarities between the *Ṛgvedic* hymns and the *Brāhmaṇical* rites, which have been considered to be grounds for proving the agreement between the *Brāhmaṇic* and *Ṛgvedic* ritual by a number of scholars like Haug, Hillebrandt³¹ and Oldenberg, he remarks, "The agreement between the formula and the rite is placed at a very high value by the Vedic authors (cf. A.B. I. 1. 4. 9). However we observe that this agreement can result from an adaptation. It has been admitted for the *Sautrāmaṇi* rite (*RV* Noten-III. 26 Oldenberg) and even in those cases, where the hymns exactly adhere to the rite, this adhesion has been able to replace another quite different as Hertel³² has tried to demonstrate for disputable purposes, it is true with regard to the *Āprī* hymns, which the classical theory comprehends with doubtful legitimacy in the *Prayājas* of the animal sacrifice. As Barth writes, (II. p. 12n) "It is extremely doubtful whether the verses of such and such an ancient hymn have been composed to serve as the *Yājyās* and the *Ānuvākyās* to the *Agniṣomiya Paśu*, which later on is an integral part of every *Soma* sacrifice."

30. RLH. p. 11. "A satisfactory solution of the oldest ritual cannot yet be given. This is so as the words like *sunvat*, *pacat* etc. descriptive of the priestly functions are there... and in general a developed ritual...." Cf. also VMH, Vol. I, p. 469, Vol. II, p. 201. RPV, p. 252.

31. VMH, Vol. I, p. 259, where he points out how the order of deities in *Rv. I. 2, 3, 23, 135-36, II. 41* is the same as the one in which offerings are made to them in the later ritual.

32. Neujahrsoffer, p. 42.

The link between the formulae and the rite is of a variable nature. It is precise in the magic traditions, even in those cases where it appears absurd to us³³ and in the Gṛhya tradition allied to it. It is less so in the solemn worship, where the magical motives do not intervene consciously, if the Yajus is sufficiently visibly constructed for a precise act, the Mantra so called, whatever be its origin, has often with the act, only a loose and naively formal link."

Agreeing substantially with the views referred to, Prof. Renou broadly generalises, (p. 7) "It is in fact a question of principle. It is impossible to imagine to take for basis the theory of the Sūtra, a ritual which coincides with the Samhitā. Besides the fact that this latter is concerned mainly with the soma sacrifice in its elementary aspects, nothing resembles less the disorderly fragmentation of the formulae attested by a descriptive prose, than the majority of the hymns, unity of which is marked by a system of metrical and phonetic signs. Everything happens as if the hymns had been composed to serve as oratorical introductions to a ceremony at which they presided without forming part of them.³⁴ Recited in course of literary conceptions, they are connected with a worship, by the environment in which they are placed, rather than by the technical application to which they give rise. It is from this point of view that one can say without any paradox that the R̥gveda is external to the Vedic worship."

Thus even though broadly recognising the inherent difference between the ritual of the R̥gvedic hymns and that of the Brāhmaṇas, Prof. Renou prefers to make a safe statement, "The ritual that we possess has been, if not conceived, at least written out at a posterior date." (p. 35).

It will thus be observed that there is considerable divergence of opinion regarding the following points connected with the present problem of the Sacrifice in the R̥gveda.

(1) Importance of realising the existence of the chronological gap between the R̥gveda Samhitā and the later ritual literature and the consequential difference in the ritual of the two; the relation between the two stages of the ritual.

(2) Simplicity of the early ritual and the extent of its growth in the R̥gvedic period.

(3) Existence of stages in the growth of the sacrifice during the period of the composition of the hymns of the R̥gveda.

(4) Connection between the R̥gvedic hymns and the Sacrifice.

(5) Basic idea underlying the sacrifice.

33. Edgerton: Volume to Prof. Thomas p. 78.

34. Ved. Stu. Vol. II, p. 152. Geldner.

(6) Material for deductions regarding the nature and influence of the sacrifice in the days of the Ṛgveda.

While pointing out this variety of views above, it is indicated that this divergence is the outcome partly, of the fact that in a general way, one likes to believe that as the Brāhmaṇas employ the hymns of the Ṛgveda in their ritual, they must have been referring to the ritual, which must have been known to them by tradition right from the days of the Ṛgveda. This inference is supported to some extent by the fact that the Sūtra literature, continues to discuss and supplement the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas according to the traditions of the schools to which they belong. It is however necessary to appreciate the fallacy underlying this presumption. As indicated above, the divine origin and the consequent authoritativeness of the Mantra and the Brāhmaṇa literature was the one point common to all schools of Vedic study that developed in course of time. It was however not so in the case of the Brāhmaṇas, the authors of which, were not conscious of any such privileged position, enjoyed by the hymns of the Ṛgveda. There was therefore not the least likelihood of their scrupulously following everything laid down in the hymns of the Ṛgveda. On the contrary, the very haphazard and arbitrary employment of the Ṛgvedic hymns and their portions in the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas would give an impression that the authors were looking upon the hymns as meant more for their convenience than for any traditions represented by them. It is out of this tendency ultimately, that the school of thought represented by Kautsa³⁵ as referred to by Yāska came into existence, which even went to the length of believing that the Mantras were meaningless.

Thus on account of this essential point of difference in the relationship between the two pairs, (1) the Ṛgveda and the Brāhmaṇas and (2) the Brāhmaṇas and the Sūtras, it cannot be legitimately concluded that the Brāhmaṇas ought to represent the ritual of the Ṛgvedic hymns. There is also another point of vital difference between the two pairs. It is known that the Sūtras were meant for discussions of sacrificial character as are the Brāhmaṇas to which they are looking for guidance. The hymns of the Ṛgveda however are not known to be essentially sacrificial in their origin. In fact, it is generally believed that a large number of hymns cannot be considered to have anything to do with the sacrifice,³⁶ though Bloomfield³⁷ has made some effort to indicate that "it is largely a collection of the hymns composed by various priest-families for this important sacrifice" (Soma-sacrifice).³⁸

35. Ni Vol. I, p. 5. Nirarthakā Mantrāḥ.

36. ASL, p. 247.

37. R.V.B., p. 75.

38. Op. cit. pp. 77-8.

As it will be observed in the following chapter, the available data about the relation of the hymns with the sacrifice, reveals the fact that the compositions have maintained a freshness about them, as they were not very rigidly tagged on to the mechanical practice of the sacrifice. In the compositions of the hymns, the dominant idea in the mind of the poet does not appear to be the employment at a particular sacrificial rite but rather the propitiation of the divinity. It is with this end in view, he employs all his emotion and poetical skill to express his feelings towards the divinity to win over its favourable disposition. In some of the hymns, the idea of their sacrificial employment may be quite obvious; in others, it may be transparent; in some others, it may not be present at all. In the majority of the hymns, however, the thought of propitiation appears to be quite predominant. With this background of the relationship of the hymns and the sacrifice in view, it can be said in a general way that though the hymns have helped the growth of the sacrifice, they were not necessarily and entirely meant for the sacrifice.³⁹ It should not however be forgotten that as the hymns and the sacrifice have been growing in the hands, practically of the same group of people, one is bound to be, in a general way, reflected in the other, as we do find to be the case. It is thus that the hymns reflect the practical approach of the sacrifice, as the sacrifice must have reflected in it the emotions and the feelings of the hymns. It is however only by a stretch of imagination that Bloomfield writes,⁴⁰ “. . . . It is sacrifice to gods, treated poetically. In other words, the poems are incidental to sacrifice.” At the same time, realising that a number of them could not be, with any reasonable stretch of imagination be construed with sacrifice, he has to add,⁴¹ “Even the R̥gveda begins to show most of them in the state of a sort of supernumeraries on the stage of sacrifice,” and to argue that “we must acknowledge that never has sacrifice had such genuine poetry to serve it.” It can be realised that this is putting together two incompatible ideas. The mechanical performance of a sacrificial rite cannot evoke genuine poetry. The genuine character of poetry can be preserved so long as the freshness of approach to divinity and the emotions characterizing it prevail. Once the form gets the upper hand, genuine poetry pales into insignificance.⁴² In the mechanism of sacrifice, the hymns have quite a secondary role to play; because therein it is not the perfection of poetical expression that counts but the perfection in the observance.⁴³ If we see the phenomenon of ‘genuine poetry serving the cause of sacrifice’ in the Brāhmaṇas, as Bloomfield has put it, the truth of the matter is that the poetry ‘is made’ to

39. Cf. L.E.V.—Renou p. 8. “.....R̥gveda est extérieur au culte védique”.

40. R.V.B., p. 64.

41. Ibid.

42. Cf. R.V.L., p. 338.

43. ‘Karmasamṛddhi’. A.B.

serve the cause of sacrifice by the authors of the Brāhmaṇas. In the days of the R̥gveda, the poetry has served the purpose of the propitiation of the divinity even as the sacrifice has done. Using a metaphor, it can be said that in the days of the R̥gveda, the hymns and the sacrifice were the two horses, drawing the chariot of the propitiation of the divinities. In the days of the Brāhmaṇas, with the shifting of the emphasis, the performance of a sacrificial rite has become a chariot to be drawn by the hymns and the divinities.

Thus though in a sense, it is true to say that the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas has grown out of the ritual of the R̥gveda, it need not make us presume any large measure of similarity between the two and that, as indicated above, there is bound to exist a gulf separating the two rituals, particularly in view of the chronological gap.⁴⁴

Another reason, which appears to have led the scholars to hold such divergent views, is the fact that just as there is ample data available for describing the sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇas and the Śrauta literature, there is no data available for describing the sacrifice in the R̥gveda. Thus Macdonell has referred to the fact about the insufficient data, followed by Keith and Deshmukh. Keith⁴⁵ was thus led to argue that for the same reason, sacrifice was to be considered as 'continuous like culture'. To some extent, the idea of Vedic schools, which came into existence at a subsequent date and which have helped immensely in the preservation of the texts and their systematic study over a long stretch of time, have helped the idea of the continuity and similarity of the rituals to gather strength. It is therefore necessary to view this point in its proper perspective to determine how far, the jump from insufficient data to general perception of similarity is an easy one.

There should be no difficulty in realizing that unless the circumstances were the same, the two rituals could not be alike. But whereas the Brāhmaṇa literature presupposes a pretty stabilised society, the hymns of the R̥gveda do not do so. If the civilization is evolving as can be noticed from the evidence of the hymns, the sacrifice also must be expected to evolve in the same way. It cannot be treated as an isolated phenomenon, whose nature can be determined by any vague and arbitrary criterion, unlike other aspects of civilization.

The history of all social institutions indicates their growth from simple to complex states and sacrifice can be no exception to it. As it is recognised by various scholars, some hymns of the R̥gveda apparently indicate a very simple ritual with one priest and it has

44. Cf V.M.H., Vol. II, Introduction p. 8. ".....separates the two periods practically to the same extent as the denouncing of the Devas separates the Avesta from the R̥gveda." At the same time writing about the ritual (Vol. I. p. 202) that it would be like that of the Brāhmaṇas.

45. R.P.V. p. 12.

grown pretty complicated in the days of the Brāhmaṇas, indicating its growth like that of all other social institutions in the course of time. That sacrifice is a social institution of an ancient origin and wide influence is indicated even in the Gītā.⁴⁶

It is for the same reason that the growth of the sacrifice in different stages has not been perceptibly stressed by scholars, though it may have been implied by some. Another thing which also appears to have escaped the notice of the scholars is the fact that the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda is the ritual that was contemporaneous with the composition of the Ṛgveda hymns. During the period of their compilation into a Saṁhitā, the ritual must have been growing and in fact, it can be imagined that it is during this period that the mechanical aspect of the sacrifice began to grow rapidly, till it reached its very rigid form, in the days of the Brāhmaṇas.

It need not be presumed, as it may be done, that the sacrifice had long been in existence before the hymns of the Ṛgveda came to be written, in order to be able to conclude that the hymns describe an advanced ritual. In this connection, it may be noted that the conclusion would have been valid if the order of the collection had reflected the employment for ritual purposes faithfully as found in the Brāhmaṇas. It is however not so in the case of the present collection (saṁhitā), which is apparently, non-ritualistic in its origin.

Thus it will be observed that insufficient data and vague ideas have led to over-statements regarding the nature of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice. It is therefore desirable to fall back on the hymns of the Ṛgveda themselves to yield whatever information they can regarding the nature of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice as that alone can constitute some reasonable evidence to base our conclusions upon. This evidence, as we have indicated above, has got its own limitations, particularly as all the hymns were not composed for sacrificial employment and even those which were so composed would not necessarily describe the full details of that performance. Even so, there is a possibility of references to certain details of performance occurring in some of the hymns, where the poets would be looking upon the sacrifice along with their hymns as a joint means of propitiating the divinity. The fact of the authors of the hymns, figuring predominantly in the carrying out of the performances of the ritual, referred to above, also cannot be lost sight of in this context. Thus when the sacrifice is growing under the eyes of the composers of the hymns, some reflection of the same is bound to be seen in their compositions. Just as the hymns of the Ṛgveda are the sole guide for having an idea about the social conditions prevailing at the time, so also they should be in the case of the sacrifice.

46. 'Sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ Sṛṣṭvā' etc. III, 10; 'evam pravartitaṁ cakram' III, 16.

Hence it is proposed to analyse the hymns of the R̥gveda as thoroughly as possible to yield all possible information regarding the Sacrifice in the R̥gveda. All words of ritual significance would be analysed and discussed in their proper context. Expression of ideas in terms of sacrifice would also play its part in yielding some information. It is thus that the analysis of the sacrificial epithets and similes would be undertaken.

There is also to be encountered the problem of the relative chronology of the hymns of the R̥gveda which cannot be resolved with a reasonable amount of certainty. In arriving at conclusions regarding stages of the growth, therefore, we can arrive at only approximate truths; but, as certain ideological developments can be marked easily, the problem need not present any insuperable obstacle in the way.

Since, chronologically, hymns of the R̥gveda, as distinguished from the remaining Vedic literature constitute one unit and since it is intended to determine the stage of sacrifice during the period of the composition of the R̥gvedic hymns herein, it is proposed to restrict the scope of the present work to a full analysis of the material from the hymns of the R̥gveda only. There is no contemporary evidence, which can be found to support the inferences from the R̥gvedic hymns. It is therefore advantageous in a way to determine as clearly as possible, the stage of sacrifice reached during the period of the composition of the R̥gvedic hymns. We have the authority of a R̥gvedic poet to fix up the R̥gvedic hymns as the right basis to do so.

X. 134. 7 Na kirdevā minīmasi nakirā yopayāmasi, Mantra śrutyam carāmasi |..... atrābhi samrabhāmahe |⁴⁷ Thus it is strictly the evidence presented by the hymns themselves that we shall abide by and there would be no deviation therefrom. As it will be observed in due course, the hymns of the R̥gveda have offered sufficient material to draw relevant conclusions therefrom. With a metaphor, in the words of another R̥gvedic poet, we can say that the hymns themselves can act as an armour to guard the safety of the conclusions that they themselves indicate (VI. 75. 19 Brahma Varma mamāntaram |).

Thus we shall discuss the relationship of the hymns with and their approach to the sacrifice in the second chapter. Consideration of the hymns with specific sacrificial importance will be left over to a subsequent chapter (chapter eleven). Then the relationship of the gods with the sacrifice and the way in which the people developed their idea of gods to play their role in the sacrifice will be

47. Velankar (B.U.J. 1953) "None of us, oh gods, violates (the dictates of the mantras); none of us has frustrated (them); We practise the dictates of the mantras. We cling to you, just here by your sides (and) by your armpits."

taken into account. In the fourth chapter, the region where the sacrifices were performed and the scene at the place of sacrifice with a variety of implements will be described. The fifth chapter will describe the various offerings that were employed in the performances and the sixth will describe the types of performances, referred to in the Ṛgveda. The seventh and the eighth chapters will describe the part played by the priests and the patrons in the development of the sacrifice. The categories of people who tried to oppose the sacrifice as a growing idea and the nature of their opposition will be indicated in the ninth chapter. The tenth chapter will discuss whether magic was the basis of the idea of sacrifice and indicate the prevalence of a mystical element in the development of the same. The analysis and classification of sacrificial similes in the twelfth chapter will indicate how the sacrifice dominated the thought of the Aryans and also how some light can be thrown on the nature of the sacrifice thereby. The thirteenth chapter will point out the influence of the sacrifice on the social structure of the time, as also on the idea of religion and philosophy. The fourteenth chapter will attempt the determination of stages, by which the sacrifice has probably grown and the stage to which it has reached during the period of the composition of the hymns. The last chapter will take stock of the situation presented and indicate the lines on which further work, concerning the topic can proceed.

Chapter Two

HYMNS AND THE SACRIFICE

यज्ञमूह्युगिरा । (Rv. VIII-26-15)

दुष्टरं यस्य साम चिद् ऋधग्यज्ञो न मानुषः । (RV-X-93-8)

SYNOPSIS:—

Inextricably connected like the Bija and the Āṅkura—Yāska's classification cannot suggest much in this regard—two schools of thought—sacrificial hymns separately discussed—remarks scattered in the Ṛgveda about this relationship—to be collected, classified and presented here with comments regarding their significance—essential as the ritual was growing under the eyes of the poets—view of a poet regarding the priority of the hymns to the sacrifice—

Standard regarding the compositions for sacrificial purposes laid down—for the acceptance by the divinities—path for the hymns to be prepared by the divinity—efficacy of the sacrifice through the hymns also stressed—sometimes the deity coaxed—even the power which comes to the gods through sacrifices, is due to the hymns—hymns occupying a place of pride in the sacrificial set-up—

Sacrifice is well performed only if associated with good hymns—gods do not like sacrifice without hymns—unrivalled hymns to different deities referred to—in fact the burden of the sacrifice said to be borne by the hymns—hymns raising the standard of the sacrifice—certain hymns said to be surpassing certain others in ritual efficacy—certain poets on the strength of their hymns, said to be dearer to the gods—performances with certain hymns said to be better than the others—Indra asked to compose a new hymn—what the hymns can achieve—all-availing hymn—even cosmological function attributed to the hymns—leading to the idea of the Gītā in 'evaṁ pravartitaṁ cakram' etc—

Hymns of sacrificial importance composed on the background of some incidents—Dānastutis—Soma hymns separately collected on account of the predominance of soma-sacrifice—emphasis on the connection of soma with hymns and sacrifice—mystically intimate relationship between soma and hymns—hymns receiving tone under the influence of soma—the reason of it—hymns as garments of soma—to satisfy the two requirements of the time viz. the hymns must be acceptable to the deities and that they must have a certain standard or tone—special categories of hymns came to be recognised and designated—some of them discussed—some deriving their names from the metres in which they were written—br̥haṭī, triṣṭubh, gāyatra, śakvaṛī gāthā and gāthā—Gāthās and Soma taken by Avesta along with the soma-ritual—

"Hotrā" said to be particularly acceptable in a sacrifice—some hymns of sacrificial importance designated without any special nomenclature—mystical significance from the point of view of sacrificial efficacy associated with certain hymns—Aṣṭapadi, on the basis of the number of syllables—yajus, mantra and sāma—association of this type with Āṅgīrasas emphasized—mode of singing sāman hymns referred to—priests given specific names on the basis of hymns—certain sāman hymns of specific potency mentioned—perhaps the most important type of the sacrificial hymns—the NIVIDS—different views—Dr. M. Haug on Nivids—were nivids of brahmanical significance in existence in the days of the Ṛgvedic hymns?—nivids

cannot stand for short formulas as accepted by scholars—passages describing nividis discussed and explained as suggesting hymns of that name—Brāhmaṇas not explaining ritual with all the above types, indicating vast difference between the ritual set-up—hence Haug's view not acceptable—some general observances.

Sacrifice and hymns are almost as vitally and inextricably connected with each other and can also be fittingly said to be evolving out of each other like the renowned 'Bija and Aṅkura' of the Vedānta doctrine. In fact it is almost futile to discuss and practically impossible to decide as to which of the two was earlier and which was later. If we could somehow know exactly the circumstances, under which the first hymn came to be written, it would help us to unravel the mystery of the first sacrifice.

In a general way, we come across the idea that the hymns give rise to sacrifice (VIII.69.1c); or conversely that the sacrifice is an incentive for new hymns (IV.20.10 *navye deṣṇe śaste asmin ta ukthe prabravāma vayamindra* etc.). But beyond suggesting their inseparable mutual relationship, it does not throw much light on the earlier origin of the one or the other. Yāska, who was the first to study the Ṛgveda in a systematic, scientific and critical way, has attempted an analysis of the hymns of the Ṛgveda in the seventh chapter of his Nirukta. He has also discussed the problem of the 'anādiṣṭa-devatā-mantras'. In the mention of the "yājña-daivata-mantra" view, he has rightly stressed the intimate relation between the hymns and the sacrifice; but his statements do not throw any light on the priority of the one or the other. The principle of the person who speaks out the hymn being the deity thereof, is more or less a literary criterion and as such cannot make clear the point whether sacrificial association for these hymns existed or did not exist. Thus the "ādhyātmikyāḥ" cannot be said to have a sacrificial background; but at the same time, there is no ground to assert with any positive emphasis that all those different categories had necessarily got a clear sacrificial association. The fact that the Brāhmaṇas have fixed up verses or portions of verses from different hymns at random in their rituals merely confirms the inference that a pretty large majority of hymns of the Ṛgveda were neither necessarily composed for a particular ritual or rituals nor had they got any rigid traditional association with any sacrificial ritual as such. Dr. M. Winternitz¹ has referred to two divergent schools of thought in this connection; some scholars like Kaegi saying that a very large majority of hymns were poetical and natural in their origin, while others like Prof. H. Oldenberg² holding that "such poetry could have arisen only in the exclusive circles of the priestly sacrificial experts". The first view is apparently based on a literary appreciation of the hymns

1. H.I.L., Vol I, p. 72.

2. RVO, p. 3.

of the Ṛgveda; but it should be remembered that, some of those hymns of literary beauty do have a sacrificial basis. The second view is untenable on the face of it, as there is no evidence whatsoever in support of it. In fact, the course of the growth of the ritual in the later days in all its variety, clearly necessitates the inference that the ritual cannot and need not be imagined to be so developed in those early days.

Some of those hymns of the Ṛgveda are obviously sacrificial in character; e.g. the Āprī hymns.³ They have been separately discussed in a different chapter.⁴ They can only give us an idea of the stage or stages of the development of the ritual in those days. But regarding the relation of the hymns with the sacrifice, a number of observations have been made occasionally by the Vedic poets and it is proposed to discuss here passages containing such observations and see what light they throw on the nature of the sacrifice in the Ṛgveda. This evidence is obviously important, more important than the views of persons, who commented upon them centuries after those hymns were composed, because of the fact that the ritual in the days of the Ṛgveda, was shaping and growing under the eyes of the Ṛgvedic poets and hence, their observations, though casually stated, carry a good deal of weight in this regard.

Even though, for all practical purposes, it is true that the question of the priority of the hymns or the sacrifices cannot be definitely decided either way, one of the poets, who is probably looking back on the growth of the hymns and the sacrifices, remarks that the hymns came to be written first and then the sacrifice came into existence, (sūktavākam prathamamādidagnimādidhvirajanya-
yanta devāḥ | sa eṣāṁ yajño abhavat tanūpāḥ X.88.8). This solitary reference cannot prove much; but it is certainly worthy of note as an opinion of one, who, though he may have been relatively late in the tradition of the hymns and the sacrifices, was certainly much nearer to them than the later speculators in the field of the interpretation of the Ṛgveda and hence, it is not altogether improbable that his statement may be containing precious grains of truth in it.

Another poet appears to be hinting at the fact that all the hymns were certainly not being composed for the sacrifice nor were they considered to be of a particular standard for the sacrifice. (Rv.VII. 29.3. Kā te asti aramkṛtiḥ sūktaiḥ, Kadā nūnam te maghavan dāsema|Viśvā matirātātane tvāyā, adha me indra śṛnavo havemā). All the hymns might have been composed in honour of certain deities but only some of them were considered as "competent" (aramkṛtiḥ) for the sacrificial performance. It was only when a particular hymn

3. B.U.J., 1945-6, AHR.

4. Vide Chapter eleven.

was admitted as competent that the offering was considered as acceptable to the divinity and hence could be given in the sacrifice as indicated by "kadā nūnaṁ maghavan dāśema". Thus it appears that hymns for sacrificial purposes were required to have a certain standard in their composition. The same is also indicated at I.120.1 (Kā rādhad hotrā aśvinā vām kathā vidhati apracetaḥ), where it is said that a certain type of hymn (here called 'hotrā') is required for undertaking the performance of a sacrifice; because otherwise the Aśvinā would not be pleased. Persons ignorant about this (apracetaḥ), could not offer the sacrifice.

The high standard of construction and gracefulness, expected in a hymn to be employed at the sacrifice is also referred to at VII.32.13 (mantramakharvaṁ sudhitam supeśasaṁ dadhātā yajñiyeṣu ā), where it is said such a hymn should be free from defects, should be well-constructed, and in general graceful (possibly with a number of figures of speech, etc.).

It is for this reason that another poet prays to the divinity concerned, that his hymn may be accepted at heart by the divinity, so that the offerings which can win their objective can be made. (I.73.10 etā ta agne ucathāni vedho, juṣṭāni santu manase hr̥de ca | śakema rāyaḥ sudhuro yamaṁ te adhi śravo devabhaktaṁ dadhānāḥ||). As both the mind and the heart of the divinity are to approve of the hymn, a good amount of skill in the composition thereof would certainly be required.

At the same time, the poet being conscious of the fact that the acceptance of the divinity can come through the help of the divinity only, is invoking the help of the divinity to grant him the necessary help. (IX.82.4c. antar vāṇiṣu pracarā—sujīvase). Soma, when pressed, is expected to find a path for the hymn (Rv.IX.96.10) and Vaiśvānara is requested to find the path for the hymn, (VII.13.3 Vaiśvānara brahmaṇe vinda gātum). It may be noted that the path for the hymn is naturally through a sacrificial performance and in this way, the vital role of the hymns in the sacrifice is amply made clear.

This consciousness too had further, the consciousness of the efficacy of the sacrifice in persuading the divinity to do the favour, as its basis. Sometime the divinity would be coaxed by promises to show the favour; at times, the hymns plainly would be referred to as bringing the wealth, of course, through the sacrifices offered to the divinity. Thus, Indra is asked to give the liberal gift that he would give to a liberal sacrificer and in return he is promised the glorification of the same in a new hymn, (IV.20.10. ā bhara daddhi tannaḥ | pra dāśuṣe dātave bhūri yat te | navye deṣṇe śasta asmin ta ukthe

prabravāma vayamindra ||). Thoughtful prayers are said to be going to Agni, with devotion to gods, begging for wealth (VII.10.3 acchā giro matayo devayantiḥ, agniḥ yanti draviṇaṁ bhikṣamānāḥ). Sometimes, new hymns are said to be composed as attractions for the divinity. (VII.26.1cd, tasmā ukthaṁ janaye yajjujoṣat nṛvanaviyaḥ śṛṇavadyathā naḥ). Even an offering of soma in the sacrifice is said to be growing on account of the hymns (IX.17.4, ā kalaśeṣu dhāvati pavitre pari śicyate | ukthairyajñeṣu vardhate |). Thus are the hymns described as incentives to the divinity for accepting a particular sacrifice. At times the poets would go a step further by saying that that the power, that the gods exercise, of course after the sacrifices have been offered to them through the assistance of the priests, is also due to those hymns sung at the sacrifices. (Rv.VII.33.3, dāśarājñe sudāsaṁ prāvadindro brahmaṇā vo vasiṣṭhāḥ and VII.33.4, yacchakvariṣu bṛhatā raveṇa indre śuṣmamadadhātā vasiṣṭhāḥ |), where the source of the power of Indra is said to be the hymns of the Vasiṣṭhas. At VIII.62.1, performances of soma-sacrifices are said to be augmenting the strength of Indra (ukthairindrasya māhinaṁ vayo vardhanti sominaḥ |). Soma juice is also said to be flowing across the obstacles on account of the hymns (IX.3.2. eṣa deva vipā kṛto ati hvarāṁsi dhāvati). Soma plant is said to be yielding the soma juice only on account of the prayers (IX.97.1, asya preṣā hemanā devaḥ devebhiḥ samapr̥kta rasaṁ). Mortals too are said to be receiving their enjoyments through the hymns (X.7.2, yadā te marto anu bhogamānaḥ, vaso dadhāno matibhiḥ sujāta). Even though the enjoyments are obtained only by the performances of the sacrifices, (yadā te vaso—bhogamānaḥ), the emphasis, it should be noted is laid on the role of the hymns. In a number of passages, the inseparable connection between the hymns and sacrifices is stressed clearly, by pointing out that the sacrifices can be fruitful only through the hymns or even suggesting that the sacrifices could not be imagined without the hymns (Rv.VII.16.2, subrahmā yajñāḥ suśamī vasūnām devaṁ rādho janānām: the sacrifice with good hymns becomes well-performed and then brings the gifts—devaṁ rādhaḥ). At VII.26.1, it is said that Indra is not delighted by sacrifice (offering of soma) without the hymns (nābrahmāṇo maghavānaṁ sutāsaḥ—mamaduḥ); and X.105.8, says that Indra is not easily pleased with hymnless sacrifices (nābrahmā yajñāḥ ṛdhag joṣati tve). At times the hymn is plainly said to be winning or successfully accomplishing the sacrifice (VII.66.8, matiriyam viprā medhasātaye). This is expressed more clearly at VIII.26.15 (viṣudruheva yajñam ūhathurgirā), where Aśvins are said to be bearing the burden of the sacrifices with the help of the hymns. At times, even the hymns are said to be bearing the burden of the sacrifices by themselves (cf. VIII.26.16, vāhiṣṭho vām havānām stomo dūtaḥ).

In order that the hymns should be able to do this, it was necessary that they should be appropriate ones for the deities concerned. It is to be noted that the various divinities had their own place of importance in the system of sacrifice, some of them quite naturally being considered as more important than the others. The standard of invocation would differ according to the status of the divinity. Particularly when a group like Viśve-Devas was to be offered a sacrifice, it was necessary to bear in mind the relative importance of the various divinities, as offerings were to be made to them either individually, one after the other, or at times in a collective manner. This fact was borne in mind while composing the hymns for certain sacrificial performances, as is made clear by a poet at VII.43.1, (Pra vo yajñesu devayanto arcan dyāvā namobhiḥ prthivi iṣadhyai | yeṣāṁ brahmāṇi asamāni viprā viṣvag viyanti vanino na śākhāḥ ||). In a poetic way, the hymns are compared with the branches of a tree. That the hymns referred to were composed specifically for purposes of the sacrifice, so that they might urge on the divinities, is made clear in ab (yajñesu archan iṣadhyai). In a very fine simile, they are compared with the branches (śākhāḥ) in cd. The common points stated are quite significant. 'Asamāni' suggests very happily that just as the branches of the trees are 'unequal', (asama),⁵ so are the hymns, obviously according to the status of the divinities. With 'śleṣa', the word also indicates that the hymns are 'unequalled' or 'unrivalled'. The hymns, with their verses addressed to various deities and thus going to them are very aptly compared with the branches of the tree, spreading in various directions.

If a hymn is particularly powerful, it is even said to be raising the standard of the sacrificial performance from human to divine plane. (cf. X.93.8, duṣṭaram yasya sāma cit, ṛdhag yajño na mānuṣaḥ). Hardly can a poetical expression be more explicit in pointing out the vital role of the hymns, as it had come to be established in the days of the Ṛgveda.

When the hymns had such control over the sacrifices, it is quite natural that the hymns of certain singers are said to surpass those of the others in winning over the divinity. Thus it is said at VIII.1.4, (Vi tartūryante maghavan aryo vipo janānām) that the songs of the wise surpass those of the others or at VIII.26.16 that a certain hymn is the best of the lot as far as the sacrificial performances to the deity are concerned. Some poets appear to be considered as nearer to the gods, on account of the hymns they were composing for sacrifices (VIII.64.9, Ukthe ka u svidantamaḥ). Even in comparison with other materials of the sacrifice, the hymn is said to be the most agreeable one (VIII.24.20 dasmyam vacaḥ ghṛtāt

5. For 'Sama' in the sense of 'equal' cf. X. 119.9 'Samau hastau'; for an 'unrivalled hymn' Cf. X.89.3, 'asamāṁ brahma' and I.54.8 'asamā manīṣā'.

svādiyo madhunaśca.....). Anyway, merely an attractive offering even like 'soma' could never be imagined in the absence of the hymn. Indra is said to be delighted with a just combination of the two, however dear 'soma' may be to him. It is so indicated at VII.26.2 (Ukthe ukthe soma Indraṁ mamāda | nīthe nīthe maghavānaṁ sutāsaḥ).

When a fresh occasion for composition arose, the poet would compose a 'doubly' powerful hymn, so that it might be found attractive by the divinity and bring blessings to friends and singers (gathered at the sacrificial performance). cf. VII.8.6, idaṁ vacaḥ śatasāḥ saṁ sahasraṁ | Udagnaye janiṣṣṭa dvibarhāḥ.....śaṁ yat stoṭrbhya āpaye bhavāti |). In a negative way it is pointed out how a hymn sustains the sacrifice at V. 44.9 (na riṣyati savanaṁ yasminnāyatā.....agrimā.....matih), where it is remarked that a soma-pressing, associated with a striking hymn does not suffer (i.e. becomes successful).

The sacrificial performance that is associated with a particularly potent hymn is said to be surpassing similar performances by others at VII.1.14 (sedagniratyastu anyān | yatra tanayaḥ.....sahasrapāthā akṣarā sameti |). In order to indicate the same inviolable relation between the hymns and sacrifices, in a very striking way a poet asks Indra to create a new hymn with or in the sacrifices, a deed which remains undone by him. (cf. VI.18.15, anu dyāvāpṛthivī tatta ojo amartyā jihata Indra devāḥ | Kṛṣvā kṛtno akṛtaṁ yatta astyukthaṁ navīyo janayasva yajñaiḥ⁶)).

The importance of the role of the hymns in the sacrifices is further indicated by a number of passages, where the efficacy of the hymns in various fields is being pointed out, of course through their association with the sacrifices. Thus at I.75.1 (juṣasva sapra-thastamaṁ vaco..... havyā juvāna āsani), Agni has been asked to accept the offerings, associated with a hymn and then in the following verse, the hymn is referred to as all-availing (sānasi), apparently through the sacrifice. Indra is said to be the winner of light through the hymns at I.131.6. Gods can be brought to the sacrifice through the hymns (I.135.5, ā vām—(Indra and Vāyu)—dhiyo vavṛtyuḥ adhvarān). The sacrificial session is said to be effective and the Aṅgirasas are said to have been enabled to penetrate the darkness through the mediation of the hymns only. (VI.65.5, vyarkaṇa bibhidurbrahmaṇā ca satyā nṛṇāmbhavad devahūtiḥ |). Gods are said to be giving gifts through the sacrifices, associated with the

6. Sāyaṇa construes yajñaiḥ as equivalent to yajñeṣu. It should however be preferably construed in the instrumental sense, as Prof. Velankar does (B.U.J. Vol. X, 1941, p. 90), indicating the twofold role of Indra, in the performances as well as in compositions.

hymns at VII.16.2 (Subrahmā yajñāḥ suśamī.....devaṁ rādho janānām).

One of the poets even claims the power, enabling him to kill the great (demons) through the hymns. IV.4.11a (maho rujāmi bandhutā vacobhiḥ |), adding that it came to him through ancestral tradition (b tanmā piturgotamādanviyāya). A very great compliment is paid to those poets, who compose hymns for sacrifices, as surpassing all others in glory. (cf. VII.7.6, ete dyumnebhīrviśvamā-tiranta, mantraṁ ye vāraṁ naryā atakṣan | Pra ye viśastiranta śroṣamāṇā, ā ca ye me asya dīdhayanṛtasya ||).

Even the cosmological function of the creation of the people is said to be attributable to Agni on account of a particularly powerful hymn, that is offered to him (I.96.2, Sa pūrvayā nividā kavyatāyorimā prajā ajanayanmanūnām |).

Even though we cannot precisely know the circumstances under which the hymns of the Ṛgveda came to be written, occasionally we do come across evidence about the *raison d'être* of some of them. Thus the Dānastutis and some other sacrificial hymns indicate their setting. It appears customary to glorify certain deeds in sacrificial sessions (cf. I.162.1d, pravakṣyāmo vidathe vīryāṇi). This was apparently done to give publicity to those incidents, which were comparatively unknown to the general public of the time.

On some of these occasions, possibly, it was customary to proclaim in chorus a particular point in the sacrifice, as is suggested at I.74.3, where Agni's 'rise' is said to be proclaimed by the people (uta bruvantu jantavo yadagnirajani.).

It also appears to be customary to sing hymns loudly at times as indicated at I.75.1 (vacaḥ saprathastamaṁ), where a song is said to be sung loudest and at VII.33.4 (yacchakvarīṣu bṛhatā raveṇa indre śuśmamadadhātā Vasiṣṭhāḥ), where the 'śakvari' hymns are said to be sung loudly. Occasionally the priests appear to approach fire gradually singing songs (cf. I.74.1, adhvaramupaprayantaḥ agnaye mantraṁ vocema |).

The fact that soma hymns have been collected separately in a Maṇḍala (the ninth) apparently indicates the predominance of soma-sacrifice in the sacrificial system. It is for this reason that we find the relation of 'soma' with the hymns emphasized in a number of places.

At IX.6.9 (evā punāna indrayurmadaṁ madiṣṭha vītaye | guhā ciddadhiṣe girāḥ ||) a poet is indicating the very intimate relationship between the soma and the hymns in a mystical tone. It should be noted that in the preceding stanza, the poet has emphasized the

role of 'soma' in the sacrifice by referring to him as "the soul of sacrifice" (IX.6.8, *ātmā yajñasya.....suṣvāṇaḥ pavate sutaḥ* |). When this 'soul of sacrifice' is assigning a place of secret importance to hymns, the importance of the hymns in the sacrifice can be realised easily. This is expressed poetically at IX.95.3 (*apāmivedūrmayastarturāṇaḥ pra maniṣā irate somamaccha | namasyantīrupa ca yanti saṁ cā ca viśantuśaṭīruśantaṁ* ||), where the poet is describing the eagerness of the hymns in going to 'soma' in ab. They are further said to be approaching him devoutly, entering him and pervading him. This eagerness is mutual as indicated by 'soma' too being referred to as 'uśan', and hence the poet wants to suggest that 'soma' and the hymns cannot be imagined in the absence of one another. The close association of soma with hymns in winning the 'Sun' is described at IX.94.1 (*adhi yadasmin vājinīva śubhaḥ spardhante dhiyaḥ sūrye na viśaḥ* |); by reference to the songs which are said to be 'struggling', the process of preparing soma juice is indicated. Soma is said to be entering the hymns (IX.20.5, *giraḥ soma viveśitha*). He is said to have been urged on by the hymns (IX.106.11, IX.25.2, 107.24) and also purified by them (IX.64.10; IX.113.5). He is also referred to as increasing on account of the hymns (IX.26.6, *girā-vṛdham*) or decorated by them (IX.40.1, 43.2, 43.3, 86.24). Sometimes the hymns are said to be going to soma (IX.34.6 *giro arṣanti*). Soma juice is said to be sitting in the place of the hymns (IX.25.6; 50.4, *arkasya yonimāsadaṁ*) or sitting around the hymns (IX.73.3). For the idea of hymns praising and licking the soma, cf. IX.86.31, 46; 95.4; 97.34. On association with the hymn, soma is said to be becoming as strong as the thunderbolt (IX.47.3, *āt soma..... vajraḥ sahasrasā bhuvat | Ukthaṁ yadasya jāyate* ||).

Soma in its turn also is said to be urging on the hymns (IX.64.25; 96.7) or increasing them (IX.40.5; 97.36, *vardhayā vācaṁ*), or purifying them even as he is purified by them (IX.86.33). He is referred to as the controller of the hymns (IX.73.6, *ślokayantra*) or leader of the hymns (IX.103.4, *netā matīnām*) or producer of the hymns (IX.67.13 *vāco jantuḥ* and IX.96.5 *janitā matīnām*).

On account of such very close association between the hymns and soma, hymns are described as garments of soma or as clothing him with a garment (IX.35.5; 43.1; 71.1d).

In this way, the special importance of the hymns in the sacrificial performances has been recognised and emphasized. Even though this may have been done in an exaggerated fashion at places, the idea that they must have certain standard and should find acceptance of the divinity, never appears to have been lost sight of. It is thus that some special categories of hymns, particularly effica-

cious⁷ from sacrificial point of view, came to be distinguished and specially designated. One such hymn, which could bring Indra to a sacrificial performance has been qualified as 'viśvapsu'⁸ at VI.35.3 (karhī svit.....viśvapsu brahma kṛṇavaḥ śaviṣṭha |.....kadā gomaghā havanāni gacchāḥ ||) where Indra's attendance at the invocation (d) is associated with the 'viśvapsu' hymn.

Of all the hymns, those composed for sacrificial purposes appear to be referred to as 'Ṛtasya dhenāḥ' at I.141.1. and 'Ṛtavāka' at IX.113.2 (Ṛtavākena satyena śraddhayā tapasā sutah), where soma is said to be pressed by a truthful sacrificial hymn. At I.147.1, the gods are said to be delighted by a 'Sāman' hymn of sacrifice (Ṛtasya sāman raṇayanta devāḥ). In a similar way certain verses or hymns of known sacrificial efficacy are referred to as 'rtasya bṛhatīḥ' at VIII.52.9 (astāvi manma pūrvyain brahmendrāya vocata | pūrvīr ṛtasya bṛhatīranūṣata stoturmedhā aṣṭkṣata ||), where the poet is referring to verses or hymns popularly known in his days for their sacrificial significance. The reference to 'intelligence' in that connection in d, possibly indicates that such hymns were the outcome of some intelligent thinking on the part of the poet. It is for this reason, it appears, that the poet of VIII.52 is composing his hymn in the 'bārhatā pragātha'.⁹

Certain other names of metres also appear to be applied to the hymns with some sacrificial association or significance. Thus the poet of IX.97, writing in 'triṣṭubh' metre, is referring to certain songs, associated with soma as 'triṣṭubhaḥ (v.35, Some arkāḥ triṣṭubhaḥ samnavante |). It appears that certain 'soma' hymns composed in the metre had come to be designated as 'triṣṭubhaḥ'.

It should be noted that the word occurs five times in the Ṛgveda, out of which at two places, it refers to the metre of the name, which is specially associated with the worship of Indra or Yama. Thus cf. X.14.16 (Triṣṭubgāyatrī chandamsi sarvā tā yama āhitā |); at X.130.5 (indrasya triṣṭubiha bhāgo ahnaḥ), the metre triṣṭubh is said to be particularly delightful to Indra, as Jagatī is to Viśvedevas and Virāt to Mitrāvaruṇā. At two other places, it appears to be used in the sense of 'offering'. (cf. 'triṣṭubham īṣam, VIII.7.1 and VIII.69.1.). This offering to Maruts and Indra must be of 'Soma' only as indicated by X.14.16ab where though the word 'triṣṭubh' is used in the sense of the metre (see above) of the name, the offerings are said to be of the soma juice. (cf. trikadrūkebhiḥ pāti.....).

7. Hymns with indications of some sacrificial employment will be discussed in Chapter XI.
8. Grassmann (Wort.) derives from प्सु² भास् and interprets "having many forms". Sāy. and Ludwig etc. derive from प्सा and interpret "all-nourishing".
9. Combination of odd verses in 'bṛhatī' and even verses in 'satobṛhatī' metre.

That, this offering is meant for the successful accomplishment of the sacrifice, is indicated at VIII.69.1c (dhiyā vo medhasātaye). Thus as the offerings of sacrificial importance appear to have come to be designated as 'triṣṭubh' and as X.130.5 indicates the sacrificial importance of Triṣṭubh metre (see above), the 'triṣṭubhaḥ arkāḥ' at X.97.35d apparently are significant as the hymns of sacrificial importance of those days.

At VIII.38.10, (ā vām sarasvatīvatorindrāgnyoravo vṛṇe | yābhyām gāyatraṁ ṛcyate ||), 'Gāyatraṁ' appears to be a hymn in gāyatrī metre¹⁰, with its importance for sacrificial purposes indicated by association with Sarasvatī.¹¹ The same indication is given by IX.60.1 (pra gāyatreṇa gāyata..... | induṁ sahasracakṣasaṁ ||), where the hymn of the name 'gāyatra' is associated with the Soma. Indrāgnī are associated with 'gāyatra' also at I.21.2. It may be noted that the word 'gāyatra' is used in the sense of a 'hymn' at about twenty places in the R̥gveda (I.27.4, 38.14, etc.); in a few places however its sacrificial association is clearly indicated. Thus at VIII.1.7, and 8, Indra is said to be going to Kaṇvas on account of the 'gāyatra' hymns, though his mind may have been attracted towards a number of other places (purutrā ciddhi te manah.....pra gāyatrā agāsiṣuḥ.....and (v.8).....yābhiḥ kṇvasya upa barhirāsadaṁ). In I.120 (a hymn composed in gāyatrī metre), the poet, after referring to some other hymns of known efficacy, wants to emphasize that his 'gāyatra' hymn also has similar efficacy (I.120.6, śrutam gāyatraṁ takavānasyāhaṁ cid hi rīrebha aśvinā). A similar sacrificial association is indicated at I.164.25 (gāyatrasya samidhastisra āhuḥ), where a 'gāyatra' hymn is associated with three samidhs. The name 'gāyatra' appears to have been so intimately associated with a sacrificial hymn that, even a hymn in 'śakvarī' metre is referred to as 'gāyatra' (X.71.11, gāyatraṁ vo gāyati śakvariṣu). It is considered to be a 'sāman' by Sāyaṇa, as it is associated with the 'udgātṛ' priest.

Though 'śakvarī' refers to the metre of that name at X.71.11, it appears to be a hymn or hymns of that name in VII.33.4, where śakvarī hymns are said to have instilled strength in Indra. (Yacchakvariṣu brhatā raveṇa indre śuṣmamadadhātā Vasīsthāḥ). As the hymn is apparently sacrificial in character,¹² the sacrificial importance of 'śakvarī' hymns, becomes evident, as Vasīṣṭha must have achieved his feat by a sacrificial performance only.

Gātha and Gāthā similarly appear to be referred to as hymns in those metres having some sacrificial significance. The word 'Gātha' is used twice in the R̥gveda. At I.167.6, its association with

10. Cf. above I. 130.4 the Gāyatrī metre as particularly associated with Agni (agner gāyatyabhavat); Cf. also I. 79.7 and I. 188.11.

11. Cf. 'Sarasvatī' in Chapter IV.

12. Cf. Chapter XI.

a sacrificial performance is made clear by referring to its being sung by one who has pressed out the soma juice and is desirous of offering worship (gāyad gātham sutasomo duvasyan). At IX.11.4, Gātha is said to be sung in honour of Soma (Somāya gāthamarcata). The word Gāthā is used five times in the Ṛgveda. At VIII.32.1, Kaṇvas are exhorted to sing gāthās in honour of Indra, under the influence of soma (Kaṇvāḥ. gāthayā. Indrasya kṛtāni made somasya pravocata). At VIII.71.14 (Agniṁ gāthabhirīṣva), Agni is said to be adored by gāthās. At VIII.98.9, Gāthā is said to be instrumental in yoking the horses of Indra (yuñjanti hari īśirasya gāthayā). At IX.99.4 (taṁ gāthayā purāṇyā punānam. . .), the very ancient association of the gāthās with soma is referred to.

X.85.6 (Raibhyāsīdanudeyī, nārāsamsī nyocani | Sūryāya bhadra-midvāso gāthayeti pariṣkṛtaṁ ||), refers to three types of hymns of obvious ritualistic importance. The poet is apparently associating some mystical significance with those different types of hymns in their relationship with the various points of description in the marriage of Sūryā. It is not clear how Griffith (Vol.II.p.501,F.N.) distinguishes between the meanings as (1) ritualistic verse (2) eulogistic hymn and (3) non-Vedic songs. It should be noted that all the three categories appear to have some sacrificial significance and not only the first. Sāyaṇa interprets 'Raibhyah' as 'some verses' and quotes Ait. Brā. VI.32.

Besides these occurrences of the word 'gātha', the epithet 'gāthapati' is applied to Rudra side by side with 'medhapati', indicating the relation between the 'gāthās' and the sacrifice. In the same way Indra appears to be called 'gātha-śravas' at VIII.2.38 and Agni 'Rjugātha' at V. 44.5.

It appears that the 'gātha' and the 'gāthā' were hymns (though the word 'gāthā' appears to be employed in the sense of a verse at VIII.71.14), which were in use from very ancient times for their sacrificial importance (IX.99.4) and efficacy (VIII.98.9). There does not appear to be anything 'non-Vedic' about them as suggested by some scholars, apparently on the basis of their association with the Avesta. If it were so, Indra, Agni and Rudra could not have been applied epithets based on 'gātha' (at I.43.4, V.44.5 and VIII.2.38) and the poets would not have been referred to proudly as 'gāthinaḥ', as is done at I.7.1. Whether the 'gāthins' were singing 'bṛhat sāmān' as stated by Sāy. (Bhāṣya on I.7.1) or not, it has to be noted that almost in all the passages in the Ṛgveda, where 'gāthas' are referred to, they are associated with 'Soma'. It is therefore probable that the 'gātha' and the 'gāthās' were hymns of particular importance at the Soma sacrifices, though a number of other hymns too were associated with them. It is on account of this ritual significance

that just like the Āpri¹³ hymns, Avesta has continued the tradition of 'gāthā' and the Soma.

'Hotrā' at places appears to be a category of hymns of sacrificial importance. Though its association with the Hotr priest is nowhere categorically referred to, it appears to be so designated on account of its relation with the priest even as the offering 'Hotrā'.¹⁴ Derived from the root hū to 'invoke' it may be referring to a hymn, efficacious in invocation of the divinity and it is thus that a poet is inquiring about the 'Hotrā' that would be acceptable to the Ásvins (I.120.1 Kā rādhad hotrā Ásvinā vām |). Its influence, as also the intelligence required in its composition are indicated at VII.104.6 (Indrāsomā pari vām bhūtu viśvata iyaṁ matiḥ kakṣyāśveva vājinā | yām vām hotrām pari hinomī medhayā.), where it is compared with a strap tying the two horses together. Ásvins are said to be furthering it at VIII.101.8. Its general efficacy is indicated at VIII.53.7^{cd}; it is said to be winning all desirable things at X.64.15 (vi śā hotrā viśvamaśnoti vāryam) and its relation with the soma sacrifice is indicated at X. 64.15^{cd} (yatra grāvā madhuśuducyate bṛhat).

Some hymns, though not specifically designated, are described as having some intimate sacrificial association and are qualified by certain peculiarities associated with them.

Thus, 'Sapta-vāṇī' at III.7.1, IX.103.3 and 104.4; 'Sapta dhīti' at IX.62.17 and 'Sapta-śīrṣṇī dhīḥ' at X.67.1 apparently refer to the same or similar hymn. III.7.1, IX.62.7, 103.3 and 104.4 refer to its association with the Soma-sacrifice. At X.67.1, ancestral tradition associated with it, is referred to. Even though some hymns are written in different metres, it does not appear that the hymns written exactly in seven different metres are intended to be referred to by these 'Sapta vāṇīḥ'. Nor is there any particular point in saying that they indicate hymns to be sung in seven different tunes. In the case of 'Sapta yavhiḥ' (III.1.4 etc.) or 'Sapta Hotrā' (X.17.11) or 'Sapta Hotrāṇī' (III.4.5) and a number of other things associated with the number seven, it appears that some mystical significance is attached to the figure 'seven' and it is with this mystical significance in their relation with the ritual in view that the hymns are qualified by the figure 'seven'.

Similar appears to be the case with 'Akṣarā' (VII.1.14) or 'Akṣarā sahasriṇī' (VII.15.9 upa tvā sātaye naro viprāso yanti dhītibhiḥ | Upā kṣarā sahasriṇī), where the poets are said to be approaching Agni for attainment (of course through sacrifice) with the help of the hymn, which is capable of 'winning a thousand'. It is said to be

13. Which are carried on as 'afringans' in the Avesta, though with changes cf. AHR in B.U.J. 1945-46.

14. Cf. Chapter V.

‘sahasrapāthā’ at VII.1.14 and to be instrumental in surpassing other sacrificial performances (sedagniragnīn atyastu anyān).

‘Aṣṭāpadī’ is the designation given to his hymn by the poet of VIII.76 (cf. v 12 vācamaṣṭāpadimahaṇi navasraktimṛtasprśam | indrāt pari tanvaṁ mame ||). Describing the peculiarity of his composition as a hymn containing eight syllables in every pāda, and having nine such pādas in every triplet (nava sraktiḥ), the poet refers to its sacrificial efficacy by saying that it is ‘ṛtasprś’.¹⁵ At II.7.5 (tvaṁ no asi bhāratāgne vaśābhirukṣabhiḥ | aṣṭāpadibhirāhutaḥ ||) also, a similar hymn appears to be referred to.¹⁶ As in the above case, this hymn also has stanzas containing eight syllables in every pāda. Therefore it appears that the name ‘aṣṭāpadī’ was given to a hymn of specific form of composition with its sacrificial association in view and a poet intending to have similar association, would specifically refer to his hymn as ‘aṣṭāpadī’ as is done by the poet of VIII.76.^{16a}

The word ‘Yajus’ is referred to in the sense of a hymn thrice in the Ṛgveda. (cf. V.62.5, barhiriva yajuṣā rakṣamānā (mitrā-varuṇā); X.181.3 and VIII.41.8 (ni yadāsu yajurdadhe). At X.181, it is referred to side by side with the Sāman hymns called ‘br̥hat’ (v.2) and ‘Rathantara’ (v.1) and appears to indicate a hymn with clear sacrificial significance as the other two. The specific purposes for which the three were employed also appear to be referred to. Thus the Rathantara Sāman appears to be used for some offering as indicated at X.181.1^b (Ānuṣṭubhasya haviṣo haviryat) and the Br̥hat Sāman, for sacrificial performance in general as indicated at X.181.2^{ab} (avindan te atihitaṁ yadāsīd yajñasya dhāma paramaṁ guhā yat. |) and the yajus hymn for offering the “gharma” (cf. chapter V) as indicated at X.181.3^d (ā sūryādabharan gharmamete |). Its efficacy in invoking the gods is indicated by its being referred to as ‘prathamam devayānam’—the first to go to the gods. This assignment of efficacy in different spheres, however appears to have merely the idea of attaching some mystical significance that the poet alone would be conscious of. We have no means to ascertain it exactly. It appears that when sacrificial importance of the hymns was recognised and emphasized, yajus nowhere refers to a formulae, surpassing in importance the other hymns as it does in the later days.

The word Mantra is used in the sense of a hymn at sixteen places in the Ṛgveda. Its connection with the sacrifice is also indicated at I.74.1 (upa prayanto adhvaraṁ mantraṁ vocema |), I.31.13, etc. It is also indicated that the poets used to devote great attention to the composition of the hymns. (I.67.2, hr̥dā yat taṣṭān mantrān

15. The hymn contains twelve stanzas divided into four triplets (tr̥cs).

16. Cf. Wort-Grassmann. Sāy.—explains the word as a ‘garbhiṇī’ cow.

16a. Vide Chapter XI under VIII.76.

aśamsan). A poet is anxiously inquiring at II.35.2 (hṛda ā sutaṣṭam mantram vocema kuvidasya vedat |), whether his hymn would be acceptable to the god. The labour, skill and intelligence required to compose such a hymn, are indicated at (VII.7.6, mantram ye vāram naryā atakṣan) and VII.32.13 (mantramakharvaṁ sudhitam supeśa-sam etc.). From the point of view of the sacrifice, there is no further specific significance attached to the 'mantras'.

The word 'Sāman' is used in the sense of a hymn in general as well as a hymn of sacrificial importance. That it was to be sung mainly, is indicated at I.173.1, II.43.2, etc. But at certain places, its peculiar significance for sacrifice seems to be predominant in the mind of the poet. Āngirasas, who are closely associated with the sacrificial tradition of the Ṛgveda¹⁷ have been associated with the composition of certain Sāman hymns (cf. I.107.2, devā āngirasām sāmabhiḥ stūyamānāḥ; X.78.5, Viśvarūpā āngiraso na sāmabhiḥ). At II.43.1 (ubhau vāchau vadati sāmāgā iva |) the reference to 'sāmaga' persons can have sense only in the sacrificial traditions. At II.43.2 (udgāteva śakune sāma gāyasi), the specific role of the Udgātṛ priest in the sacrificial performance viz. to sing sāma hymns, is clearly referred to. At V.44.14 and 15 (yo jāgāra tamṛcaḥ kāmāyante, yo jāgāra tamu sāmāni yanti |), the alertness required in the performance is emphasized. At VIII.81.5 (pra stoṣat upa gāṣiṣat śravat sāma giyamānaḥ | abhi rādhasā jugurat), the idea that a divinity gives gifts as a result of singing a song in a particular fashion appears to have been indicated. For Sāman hymns of a particular efficacy in the sacrifice, very handsome gifts appear to be offered to the priest. Thus at VIII.6.47 (trīṇi śatānyarvatām sahasrā daśa gonām | daduṣ-pajrāya sāmne |), the gift of three hundred horses and ten thousand cows to Pajra,¹⁸ is referred to. An effective Sāman hymn of the poet is also referred to at VIII.4.17, where the poet is jealously referring to the Sāman hymn of Pajra, indicating its importance. (na tasya vemyaraṇam hi tadvaso stuṣe pajrāya sāmne).

Some of the sāmān hymns appear to be considered as more efficacious than the others as is indicated at VIII.29.10 (arcanta eke mahī sāmā manvata tena sūryamarocayan), where a mighty sāmān hymn is said to be instrumental in winning the Sun. Some such hymns came to be specifically designated, though the names do not appear to be clearly used in that sense in the Ṛgveda. In a general way such sāmān hymns of sacrificial importance are referred to at I.147.1 (ṛtasya sāmān raṇayanta devāḥ), where the gods are said to be delighted therein. According to Sāy.¹⁹ on 1.7.1 (Indramid gāthino bṛhad. Indram vāṇīranūṣata |) the 'bṛhat', said to be

17. Vide Chapter VII.

18. Vide Chapter VII.

19. 'tvāmiddhī havāmahe' (Rv. VI. 46.1) ityasyamṛci utpannena bṛhannāmakena Sāmān |

sung by the 'Gāthins' is the 'bṛhat sāmān' of the later days. At X.181.2, Bharadvāja is said to have composed it (Bharadvājo bṛhadācakre Agneḥ |). The verse referred to by Sāyaṇa (VI.46.1) appears to be designated as 'bṛhat sāmān' mainly on account of the hymn being composed in the Bṛhatī metre. It may be noted that the said hymn (VI.46) is composed by a junior member of the Bharadvāja family (Śaṁyuh Bārhaspatya) according to the tradition of the Anuk. and as such may have been late in its origin. Another variety of sāmān referred to in the later Samhitās²⁰ is the 'Rathantara Sāmān'.²¹ The word Rathantara is used twice in the Ṛgveda. At I.164.25 (Rathantare sūryam paryapaśyat) the sāmān is said to be associated with the finding of Sūrya. At X.181.1 (prathaśca yasya saprathaśca nāma ānuṣṭubhasya haviṣo haviryat | Dhāturdyutānāt savituśca viṣṇo rathantaramājabhārā vasiṣṭhaḥ |), the Sāmān is said to be brought by Vasiṣṭha. Whatever the exact meaning of ab, some offering of importance is apparently referred to therein and this lends support to the idea about the sacrificial efficacy²² of the Rathantara Sāmān. It may be noted that VII.32 is also known to be a comparatively later hymn in the Vasiṣṭha group and hence this sāmān too appears to be late in origin like the 'Bṛhat Sāmān'. Another sāmān of sacrificial importance appears to be the 'prṣṭha sāmān', referred to at IV.5.6 (manma) bṛhaddadhāta.yavham prṣṭham prayasā saptadhātu), where it is associated with sevenfold food (parayasā saptadhātu). An efficacious Sāmān hymn of the Pajra family²³ is referred to at VIII.6.47 and VIII.4.17.

Indra is said to be particularly pleased with the ukthas and the nīthas (VII.26.2, Uktha ukthe soma indram mamāda, nīthe nīthe maghavānam sutāsaḥ |). At IV.3.16 (etā viśvā viduṣe tubhyaṁ vedho nīthānyagne niṣyā vacāṁsi | Nivacanā kavaye kāvyāni āśamsiṣam matibhir vipra ukthaiḥ) certain 'nīthas' are referred to as secret speeches or words, may be on account of the low tone in which they were to be sung at the sacrifices or on account of some mystical significance that had come to be associated with them. They are described as 'nivacanās', possibly on account of their decisive character (cf. also I. 189.8; IX.97.2; X.113.10.)

Perhaps the most significant from the point of view of the sacrifices were the 'Nivids',²⁴ which got a peculiar restricted sense in the later Samhitās and the Brāhmaṇas. The opinions of scholars are sharply divided on the question of their nature in the Ṛgveda, some holding that the 'Nivids' have the same technical sense even

20. VS. 10.10; Sām. II. i-1.11.

21. The verses referred to are RV VII-32.22-23.

22. 'Sāy.' on VII. 32. 22-23. Ratharambhaśādhanaṁ sāmā tad rathantaram.

23. Cf. Chapter VII.

24. V. I. Vol. II p. 452.

in the Ṛgveda itself²⁵ and others opposing it.²⁶ Oldenberg²⁷ feels that they are referred to in the technical sense only at 1.96.2. Dr. Haug has dealt with the question of Nigada and Nivid formulae at some length²⁸ and pointed out some correspondence with certain formula in the Avesta ritual.²⁹ They are obviously preserved as "Nivaēdayēmi" in Avesta, though their form cannot be regarded as identical in any sense. Therefore they are certainly not the fabrications of the Brāhmaṇas though the latter may have introduced certain changes in their form. According to the Brāhmaṇas they are an address either to a single deity or a class of deities, inviting them to enjoy the soma libation. They generally contain enumeration and qualities of the respective deities. Their proper place is only the Mādhyandina and the Sāyantana savanas. All the Nivids are given in Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta Sūtra, 8.16-23. They have no regular metre but a kind of rhythm.³⁰

Though we may accept Haug's view that all the sacrificial hymns are not necessarily late hymns, we cannot agree with his view that the Nivids were in existence in their technical form right in the days of the Ṛgveda. Their sacrificial association is quite evident; but there is no evidence to prove that they existed in their technical form in the days of the Ṛgveda.

It should be noted that the other sacrificial formulae 'Nigada', associated by the Brāhmaṇa literature with the Nivid, is not known to the Ṛgveda at all. The omission is certainly significant. It may further be noted that the Ṛgvedic hymns do not refer to any verbal form from the root vid with ni, from which apparently the word Nivid is derived. In fact, there is nothing in the Ṛgveda to indicate that the 'Nivid' refers to a short formulae as said by the later literature. The word rather appears to be used in the sense of a hymn at 1.175.6 (yathā pūrvebhyo jaritṛbhya Indra..... tān anu tvā nividaṁ johavāmi) where the poet refers to his hymn as a 'nivid' just like one of the ancient singers. 'Tān' in c may indicate a particular Nivid hymn that an earlier poet has employed with apparent sacrificial importance. The sacrificial efficacy of an ancient 'Nivid' is also referred to at 1.89.3 (tān pūrvayā nivida hūmahe vayan). At 1.96.2, the creation of human beings is attributed to the instrumentality of a Nivid (sa pūrvayā nivida kavyatāyoḥ imāḥ prajā ajanayanmanūnām). This indicates the sacrificial setting of the Nivid, which appears to be composed by 'Āyu' in the ancient days. This Nivid hymn, possibly contained some instructions of a sacrificial

25. Orion—Tilak p. 206.

26. Weber p. 265 and 355.

27. V. H. p. 119, 122.

28. ABI Vol. I. p. 36-40 and Vol. II. p. 142, F.N. 2 and p. 189, F.N. 25.

29. For a summary of the same cf. HSL, Vol. II, p. 99.

30. A.B. Vol. II, p. 142, F.N. 2; RPV, Keith I. p. 253, 295; RVO, p. 387, n. 2; VMH, III, 2094.

nature as can become evident from II.36.6 (juṣethām yajñām bodhatām havasya me | satto hotā nvidaḥ pūrvyā anu), where the poet expects the god to listen to his call and accept his sacrifice, when the priest is seated in accordance with some ancient Nivids, which certainly do not appear to have been short formula. At IV.18.7 (kimuṣvidasmai nivido bhananta, indrasyāvadyām didhiṣanta āpaḥ), it is being argued that nivids would not have been addressed to Indra, if the guilt (of killing Vṛtra) would have been with him. At VI.67.10 vi yad vācam kīstāso bharante | śāmsanti kecinnivido manānāḥ), the Nivids are referred to as sung by some thoughtful persons indicating their authoritative character since ancient days.

Thus it appears that the Nivids that the Ṛgvedic poets have in view are hymns of a forceful character, composed intelligently for some sacrificial attainment and associated with the idea of sacrificial efficacy from old days.³¹

It will thus be realised that out of a large number of different types of hymns of sacrificial efficacy referred to in the Ṛgveda, some like Bṛhatī derive their names from the metres in which they are written, some like Hotrā derive their name from the priest with whom they were associated, some like Gāthās as they were positively of the nature of to be sung, while in the case of some like the Nivids, the exact point which led to their designation as such cannot be understood. It is possible that the poets who employed these designations had got some ritual in view, which they have attempted to describe and suggest through those hymns.

When we remember that the Brāhmaṇas have not tried to explain the sacrificial peculiarity of all those different types of hymns referred to above, and to associate them with their ritual, it can be very easily realised that this is due to the vast difference between the ritual of the Ṛgveda and that of the Brāhmaṇas. We cannot therefore agree with the view of Dr. M. Haug that the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas was pretty much the same even when the hymns of the Ṛgveda were being composed.³²

Howsoever may the hymns and the sacrifice have grown in their relationship, it was emphasized that both of them were adding to each other's glory. Just as the hymns are said to be making the sacrifice divine at X.93.8,³³ it is also stated that the hymns shone at the place of sacrifice only (X.111.2, ṛtasya hi sadasaḥ dhitiḥ adyaut |). The hymns in their basic aspect of speech in its divine form (X.177.2ab, patāṅgo vācam manasā bibharti, tām gandharvo avadat garbhe antaḥ), are said to be guarded in the place of sacrifice by the

31. Cf. Macdonell V.I. I-452. "The word is hardly used in the technical sense of the Brāhmaṇas."

32. ABI, p. 31.

33. Quoted above.

poets (cd. *tām dyotamānām svaryam manīṣāmṛtasya pade kavayo ni pānti* |).

Having thus observed the connection of the hymns with the sacrifice in its various aspects, it remains to be seen how far the hymns in general were written specifically for the purposes of the sacrifice and in which way they were ordinarily employed in the ritual of the time.

It may be noted that this consideration implies the idea of subservience of the hymns to the sacrifice, which however, is not supported by the above discussion of their manifold relationship. Admitting the literary character of the hymns, particularly the freshness and emotional outlook, displayed by a very large number of them, it should be evident that they were meant as an instrument of propitiation of the divinity even as the sacrifice itself. They thus stand on a footing of equality with the sacrifice and never appear to be subservient to it. Some of the hymns appear to be composed for the sake of sacrifice (vide chapter XI) and we can get some broad indication regarding their employment in the ritual. But this is true only of a very few of them. It will be seen in the case of a majority of them that as they serve the purpose of the propitiation of the divinity along with the sacrifice, definite usages regarding their employment do not appear to have come into existence. Some broad usages however appear to be evolving along with the evolution of the sacrifice during the period of the R̥gveda hymns. Some of these as can be inferred from the hymns, will be indicated in the course of discussion in some later chapters.³⁴ It may, however, be noted that even in the case of the Āpri hymns, which indicate a fairly stereotyped ritual, quite a wide choice appears to be exercised in the course of its employment and we may safely infer that beyond their recitation at the time of the performance, very rigid rules in this regard do not appear to be in force. Occasionally however, different families appear to be trying to introduce certain innovations in this connection.

The ritual retained a kind of freshness and simplicity about it as long as the hymns preserved their freshness and emotional character. It can be said that fresh compositions appear to be discouraged when the sacrifice attained a rigid and mechanical form. At an earlier stage, a fresh hymn was said to constitute the requirement of a sacrificial performance. Later on, the requirement came to be restricted to the mechanical performance in a particular fashion, for describing which the Brāhmaṇa texts came into existence.

Thus it would appear that at least during the period of the composition of the majority of the R̥gvedic hymns, which are charac-

34. Cf. Chapters V, VI and XI.

terized by freshness in composition and emotional appeal, sacrifice cannot be imagined to have attained a mechanical and rigid character.

Thus an analysis of the various passages concerning the relationship of the hymns with the sacrifice, yields some information regarding the idea of the R̥gvedic poets about the sacrifice. It appears that the poet of X.88.8 (quoted earlier) is looking back upon the sacrifice as it has developed by his time and is referring to the traditional view about the origin of the sacrifice or is stating his opinion about the phenomenon. Either way, it is suggestive enough that the art of composition is given a prior place in comparison with the sacrifice. To put it in a general way, thought always precedes the action and so it is quite in the fitness of things that the hymns should precede the action evolved out of them, viz., the sacrifice. This order of evolution has also a significant bearing on the growth of the cultural conceptions of the R̥gvedic Aryans. The thinkers of the time, who were developing their idea of divinity through the hymns in the beginning, must have found the sacrifice to be an effective instrument to give it a definite shape. Intellectual development of a pretty high order can be witnessed in the composition of the hymns and along with the sacrifice which has grown on association with them, we get ample evidence of a very high stature of the people from intellectual and cultural points of view.

All the hymns therefore need not be imagined to have a sacrificial setting, though that must have started becoming more and more defined with the growth of the idea and practice of sacrifice. It is for this reason that even the Brāhmaṇas could not pick up all of them for their purposes and Yāska too, when he attempted a critical study of the R̥gvedic hymns could not apply the criterion of sacrifice in their classification.

Between the two, the balance has turned neither in favour of the predominance of the hymns nor that of the sacrifice, though occasionally, one appears to be stressed as more important than the other. It should be noted that the decisive importance attached to the sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇa literature is conspicuous by its absence in the hymns of the R̥gveda. It is from this point of view that the 'Bijānkura dṛṣṭānta', referred to above is quite significant. Just as between the Bija and the Aṅkura, each one has its unique role, so that none can dispense with the existence of the other, so too is the case with the mutual relationship between the hymns and the sacrifice.

The poets, who are all the while conscious of their art of composition, have not failed to emphasize the importance of the hymns in the sacrificial set-up as at V.44.9 or in a general way by saying that the hymns give certain 'tone' to the sacrifice or bear the burden

of sacrifice or raise its level from the human to celestial plane or at times even ascribing the divine function of creation of subjects to them. It is here that we come across the beginning of the idea of "the wheel of sacrifice" (yajña-cakra), propounded in a masterly fashion by the author of the *Gītā*,³⁵ by pointing out the interdependence of the various entries in the evolution of the universe.

The collection of Soma hymns separately in a Maṇḍala (No. IX) is significant of the emphasis on the soma ritual in the days of the *R̥gveda* and hence the relation of hymns with soma has been referred to at some length above. As the hymns came to be increasingly associated with the sacrificial set-up, it was inevitable that certain hymns came to be designated specifically on the basis of their distinctive sacrificial character. Among them 'Gāthās' deserve special notice as they have been picked up in the later literature of the Aryans as well as in the *Avesta* along with the soma ritual. As a result of some of these characteristically designated sacrificial hymns, the priests also appear to be given certain distinctive designations on account of their association with either the composition of such hymns or the ritual connected therewith. Thus III.12.5 mentions 'Ukthinaḥ' and 'Nīthāvidaḥ'. At I.7.1, 'Gāthins' are said to have sung the 'br̥hat sāman'.

Thus when this fact of the ritual that is growing with the composition of the hymns of varying sacrificial importance is lost sight of, scholars are led to mix up the ritual of the *R̥gveda* with that of the *Brāhmaṇas*.³⁶ Macdonell even goes to the length of saying³⁷ "It is doubtful, whether even in the earliest period, much room was left, owing to the highly ritual type of worship, for independent prayer." Such views have to be discarded as not borne out by the evidence of the analysis given above.

We may therefore reasonably conclude that the relationship of the hymns and the sacrifice suggests the fact that the ritual has been evolving in certain stages, though all of them cannot be very precisely determined for want of any clear-cut data regarding the chronological priority or otherwise of the hymns.

35. III. 14-16.

36. ABI, (quoted above) and RVB (quoted above).

37. ERE, Vol. XII, p. 610

Chapter Three

GODS AND THE SACRIFICE

अयं वो यज्ञो अकृत प्रशस्तिम् । (Rv.I. 181.1)

यज्ञो देवानां प्रत्येति सुम्नम् । (RV.I. 107.1)

SYNOPSIS:—

Mutual dependence of the gods and the sacrifice—not mechanical—freshness of the approach to the idea of divinity and sacrifice—closer scrutiny of their relationship necessary—relation explained by Śaṅkara's illustration—idea of divinity through various stages—sacrifice and hymns prospered with freshness in approach—Dominant position in sacrifice to gods—substantiated by the variety of ways in which the relationship is explained—the gods know, lay down, accept, enjoy and even receive entire credit for the performance of sacrifices—sacrifice prospering under attention of gods—sacrifice influences gods—their predominance never undermined—sacrifice said to be created by the gods—

The number of hymns in honour of a deity—criterion for relative importance in the sacrificial set-up—peculiar position of Agni in the sacrifice—Agni's importance never minimised—sacrifice associated with Agni in all stages—sacrificial epithets of Agni indicating his predominant position—comparison with some epithets of Indra and Soma to illustrate their relative position in the system of sacrifice—

Indra hymns—characteristic contribution to the growth of sacrifice—Indra as the inspiring spirit of the sacrifice—Indra and sacrifice, growing in popular esteem—his two great deeds—driving away the Dasyus and stabilising the sacrifice—sacrificial epithets of Indra and their indication—strong likes and dislikes of Indra—majority of epithets based on soma juice—frequency of the performances in honour of Indra—purity of heart in worship referred to—

'Soma' as a divinity—circumstances—relation with sacrifice—some characteristic sacrificial epithets—Aśvins—association with soma-ritual—similarity with the work of the Ṛbhus—associated with 'soma'-chant of mystical significance—their association with the non-Aryans—spread of Aśvin worship—Relation with Tvaṣṭṛ and Ṛbhus—Tvaṣṭṛ's help in sacrifice—

Varuṇa—Ṛta and sacrifice—association with 'soma'-ritual—reasons for comparatively lower place of Varuṇa in the system of sacrifice—Uṣas, Maruts and others—Viśvedevas introduced later for sacrifice—clash of ideas regarding divinity and mode of worship, sought to be resolved by introducing Viśvedevas—frequent stress on agreement—Indra retaining his prominence even in the group worship—the worship centred round Agni—different types of Viśvedevā hymns—epithets in common with other divinities—spread of the cult of sacrifice—influence summed up in X.65.11.

Gods and the sacrifice appear to be considered as dependent on each other right from very ancient days even as indicated in the Gītā.¹ It does not appear to be, however, a mechanical dependence, as it has not led to a stagnation of their growth. The enthusiasm with which the Ṛgvedic Aryans are evolving their idea of the divinity

1. III.11 Devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vah |

both in its qualitative and quantitative aspects, can give us an indication of the freshness of their approach to the problem of the divinity and the divine worship. As indicated in the first chapter, mythology and sacrifice are the two aspects—theoretical and practical—of the Aryan religion. The relationship between the gods and the sacrifice, in a sense, can be said to be exponent of this twofold aspect of the religious thought of the R̥gvedic Aryans. This mutual relationship therefore requires closer scrutiny, as it is likely to reveal a fresh and important corner of the Aryan mind, which appears to have attempted to evolve intelligently and systematically the conception of the interdependence between the gods and the sacrifice.

If the relation between the hymns and the sacrifice can be described by the well-known vedāntic illustration of the Bija and the Aṅkura, the relation between the hymns and the sacrifice on the one hand and the gods on the other, can be described by the well-known illustration of the veteran vedāntin Śrī Śaṅkara (Īśvarastu parjanyaavad draṣṭavyaḥ, Ś. Bhā on II.i.26) viz., as the relation between the rain on the one hand and the seed (Bija) and the sprout (Aṅkura) on the other. The illustration can be stretched further by taking the scene of sacrifice (chapter IV below) as the land, where the seed could be planted or the rain could shower on. Hymns and the sacrifice are as much dependent on the gods as are the seed and the sprout on the rain. The similarity, however, cannot be strained further, to extend to the idea of divine unity worshipped in the sacrifice, for all the stages of its evolution.

The idea of divinity has passed through various stages in the R̥gveda, viz., as independent individual divinities, as joint divinities, all divinities or some of them together constituting a single group, as one or more creator divinities, as one concrete principle underlying the divinities or finally as an abstract principle, underlying the whole phenomenon of existence. As we shall see below,² the idea of sacrifice has influenced to a certain extent, the idea of divinity and hence it cannot be said that the sacrifice has visualized one single divinity as intended for its purpose. In fact, it can be said that as long as the poets were trying to evolve their idea of divinity, and as long as there was enthusiasm and freshness about the same, new hymns came to be written. With the idea of divinity, the hymns too prospered, sacrifice receiving its proportionate share along with the hymns. But once the mechanisation of the idea of sacrifice set in, the composition of new hymns ceased and divinities deteriorated merely to the position of a wheel or wheels in the mechanism of the sacrifice.

In the hymns of the R̥gveda, it can be very easily seen that the dominant position in the system of sacrifice is occupied by the gods.

2. Chapters XIII and XIV.

It is the hymn that is to find the favourable acceptance of the gods (I.141.11, *Devānām śamsamṛta ā ca*; I.107.1, *yajño devānām pratyeti sumnam*). Sacrifice is said to be in the heart of the gods (VIII.18.19, *yajño hīlo vo antarah*); or the sacrifice itself is said to be the glorification of the gods (I.181.1, *ayam vo yajño akṛta praśastiṁ* |). Gods are said to have attached this much importance to the sacrifice, as they wanted the offerings, which could come to them only through the sacrifices. Thus even as Indra is eager to drink the soma-juice (III.35.9, *vāvaśānaḥ somaṁ*; IV.24.6, *somaṁ uśan*), the gods in general are said to be eager for sacrifice (III.20.1, *adhvaram vāvaśānaḥ*). As the gods are said to have raised the sacrifice to such a high level of importance, the poets want to establish relationship with the gods through the sacrifice (VIII.18.19, *yuṣme idvo api śmasi sajātye* |). This idea of the upper hand of the gods in the system of sacrifice can be substantiated by observing the variety of ways in which the relationship of the gods with the sacrifice is described in the hymns of the Ṛgveda.

This relationship is expressed variously so as to indicate how the sacrifice, in its early stages, was considered necessarily as dependent on the gods. In quite a large number of passages, the gods are said to be approaching the sacrifice on request. Thus at I.112.2, the Aśvins are requested to come with their protections (*tābhīrūtibhirāgataṁ*). They would be coming for the enjoyment of the oblations that are offered; (I.135.3, *adhvaramupa yāhi vītaye | tavāyam bhāga ṛtviyaḥ* | cf. also IV.47.1,3; 48.1,4; VI.68.10; VIII.20.10,16); and as they would like the same, they would come willingly (I.171.2, *upa imā yāta manasā juṣāṇā*).

The divinities would thus come to the sacrifice because they would be knowing the sacrifice as well as the offerings offered therein, as indicated at III.11.1 (*veda yajñamānuṣak*). Agni is said to be knowing the sacrifice (IV.3.4, *ṛtasya bodhi ṛtacit svādhīḥ*) and the oblations (V.60.6, *Agne vittād haviṣo yadyajāma*).

It is thus that the divinity is said to be desiring the sacrifice (I.3.10). Thus even though the gods are eager for the sacrifice, being attracted by the offerings given therein, their superior status is never lost sight of and they are very frequently requested to accept the sacrifice that is offered. This idea throws a good deal of light on the relationship between the divinity and the worshipper. Sacrifice has been found as a means of approaching the gods; but the means never appears to have transgressed the limit and superseded in importance the end in view, viz., the gods. The poets appear to be trying to propitiate the divinity by stressing the attractiveness of their offerings and the idea of the favour of acceptance lying with the gods, which is the underlying tone of the doctrine of devotion, always appears to be present in the mind of the poets. It is

thus that the divinities are asked to accept the sacrifice (I.139.11, *yajñamimam juṣadhvaṃ*, III.22.4, *purīṣyāso agnayo yajñam juṣantān* and also III.24.2, IV.2.10; 9.7, V.4.8, 55.10; 72.3, 78.3; VI.47.28; 52.11; 69.1; VII.42.5; VIII.35.4, 38.4, 57.2; X.15.4, 81.6, 150.2). They are requested to enjoy it (I.151.3,7, *adhvaram vithaḥ*; III.40.4; 53.1; V.II.4, *Agnirno yajñamupavetu sādhuṣā*). The gods are described as delighted at the sacrifices as the cows at the pasture (V.53.16, *stuvato asya yāmani raṇan gāvo na yavase* | cf. also VII.82.7, IX.12.7, X.61.4). The idea of acceptance is negatively expressed at VI.41.1 (*aheḷamāna upayāhi yajñam*). At V.41.7, *Uṣāsānaktā* are said to be bringing the sacrifice for the mortals. Agni, acting as the messenger, is often asked to bring the gods to the sacrifice. (III.35.2, *upemaṃ yajñamāvahatendraṃ*; V.26.2, VII.16.4, *devān ā vitaye vaha*; V.1.11 and 4.4, *devān haviradyāya vakṣi*; VI.11.1; 50.9 and X.51.7).

The gods are said to be leading or are requested to lead the sacrifice obviously as they are so vitally interested in the performances of those rites. (I.40.3, *devā yajñam nayantu naḥ*; I.41.5 *yam yajñam nayathā*; VI.15.16 *yajñam naya yajamānāya sādhu*; VIII.44.8, *agne yajñam naya*; X.66.12b, *prāñcam no yajñam praṇayata sādhuṣā*; Sacrifice is said to be meant for the sake of the gods (II.5.8, *tve yajñam cakṛmā vyaṃ*; IV.17.18, *vayaṃ hyā te cakṛmā sabādhaḥ śamibhiḥ*; IV.34.3, *ayaṃ vo yajñāḥ akāri*).

The credit of assisting, or adorning the sacrifice is given to the gods, further confirming the superior status, enjoyed by them. (Thus I.93.12, *kṛṇutaṃ no adhvaram śruṣṭimantaṃ*; V.13.4; VI.10.1; 62.2; VII.2.7, *ūrdhvaṃ no adhvaram kṛtaṃ*; VII.84.3, *kṛtaṃ no yajñam vidatheṣu cāruṃ*; X.110.2, *devatrā naḥ adhvaram kṛṇuta*). The gods, apparently by their presence or by some activity are said to be sweetening the sacrifice or sprinkling it over with mead. I.22.13, *imaṃ yajñam mimikṣataṃ*; I.34.3, *yajñam madhunā mimikṣtaṃ*; I.47.4; I.142.3; VIII.10.2, *yadvā yajñam manave saṃmimikṣuḥ*). Even the credit of the entire performance is given to the gods, particularly to Agni. Thus X.110.11, *sadyo jāto vyamimīta yajñam*; VIII.92.21, *devāso yajñamatnata*. The idea is expressed by *yajñam yaja* or *yajñam yakṣa* at a number of places. cf. I.142.8; II.3.1,3; III.4.1, 17.3, 29.8, 12; V.21.1; VI.11.4, 16.9, 49.9; VII.42.3; VIII.46.17; IX.1.6, 7.6, etc.; X.52.6, 81.5, 110.7, etc. In these places, ordinarily Agni is said to be sacrificing to the other gods or the gods are said to be performing the sacrifice; but when the offering is meant for Agni only, a poet refers to it as a sacrifice offered by Agni to his own self. cf. VI.11.2, '*pāvakayā juvā vahnirāsā, agne yajasva tanvaṃ tava svām*'). The gods are said to be sitting round the sacrifice, indicating their interest in the sacrificial performance. Cf. II.2.5, *viśvaṃ paribhūtu adhvaram*; IV.56.7, *pari yajñam ni ṣedathuḥ*. As they are so interested, they are described as protecting the sacrifice. Cf.

III.9.6, *viśvān yadyajñānnabhi pāsi mānuṣā, tava kṛtvā yaviṣṭhya* |; IV.33.3, *te no yajñamavantu*; V.5.5, 5.9, 52.10; VI.40.5, *ato no yajñamavase pāhi*; X.128.7.

Sacrifice is thus not only going on under the attention of the gods, but it is also said to be prospering on account of the assistance of the gods. (I.10.4, *yajñam ca vardhaya*; III.17.2, 40.3, *yajñam pratiremamadya*; X.36.6, *divisprśam yajñam kṛṇuta*; X.141.6; 188.3).

On account of this very intimate relationship between the gods and the sacrifice, the sacrifice is said to be going to the gods (V.22.2, 26.8, *pra yajña etu ānuṣak*). When Agni, as a messenger has done the work of carrying the sacrifice to the gods, the sacrifice can very well be said to have been laid down by him or even by the divinities in general. Cf. 1.3.11, *Sarasvatī yajñam dadhe*; III.17.5 *athā no dhā adhvaram devavītau*; III.29.8, *sādayā yajñam sukṛtasya yonau*; IV.34.2; V.77.1, VI.11.5; 51.1, *yajñam dadhatu*. At VII.99.4, (*ūrum yajñāya cakrathuru lokam*), the gods are said to be facilitating the sacrificial performances, which would indicate the expansion of the cult over a wide area.

Just as the gods are said to have influenced the sacrifice, the sacrifice is also said to have influenced the gods occasionally. Thus the sacrifice is said to have prospered the gods (I.173.11 *yajño hi śma kaścidindram ṛndhan*; II.2.1, *yajñena vardhata jātavedasam*; III.32.12, *yajño hi te indra vardhano bhūt*; VI.38.4, *vardhādayam yajña.....indram*; VI.40.4, VIII.14.5; X.20.6.) Even the human beings are said to be making the gods stronger by the sacrifices. (VIII.20.6, *yajñairye indre dadhate duvāmsi*).

Ṛta, the supporting principle of all human activity, with which the gods are very intimately related, is said to be associated with the sacrifice quite naturally, as the sacrifice has moulded the ideas of the Ṛgvedic Aryans in all walks of life. Ṛta is a principle, that is higher than the gods as the latter are said to be born in the Ṛta (Ṛtajāta I.144.7, III.20.2, etc.). The greatness of the gods is said to be significant on account of the Ṛta (II.27.8, *ṛtenādityā mahi vo mahitvam*). When they come to be described as protectors of the Ṛta (Ṛtapāḥ VII.20.6, etc.), it becomes clear that the gods were associated with a system that promoted the cause of the Ṛta. At I.159.1, it is indicated that this system is the sacrifice. It is through the system of the sacrifice, that the gods were considered as playing their role in the promotion of the cause of the Ṛta (*pra dyāvā yajñaiḥ pṛthivī ṛtāvṛdhā*). In these few passages, it is the importance of the sacrifice that is sought to be emphasized and not the predominance of the gods sought to be undermined. Besides the numerous passages, indicating the predominant position of the gods referred to above, it may be noted that the gods are said to be

making the sacrifice perfect (VI.10.1, VII.17.3.4, svadhvarā karati. . . . cf. also VIII.12.19). Sacrifices are said to centre round Agni (V.9.2, saṁ yajñāsaścaranti yaṁ). Indra is said to be making the sacrifice mighty (IV.23.1, kathā mahāmavṛdhat kasya hoturyajñam juṣāno). It is the gods again, who are said to give strength even for the performances of sacrifices (I.111.2, yajñāya takṣata ṛbhumadvayaḥ). Sacrifices are said to depend upon the gods (VIII.10.4, yayoradhi pra yajñāḥ). Indra is said to be giving impetus to the sacrifice by his guidance (VIII.6.22, tavendra praṇīṣu yajño vitanasāyyaḥ).

X.65.7, is more significant in this context, as therein the sacrifice is said to have been created by the gods. (divakṣaso agnijivhā ṛtāvṛdha ṛtasya yoniṁ vimṛśanta āsate | dyām skabhitvī apā cakrurojaśa, yajñam janitvī tanvī ni māmṛjuḥ ||). In this passage, the gods, who are the promoters of the Ṛta, and who are said to be pondering over the source of the Ṛta (b), are said to have created the sacrifice, through the assistance of Agni (as Agni is said to be their tongue), after they had supported the Heaven, Earth and the Waters. This suggests that the sacrifice was considered to be a system of cosmic importance, as it concerns the whole universe. Its creation is in line with that of the Heaven, Earth and the Waters, which symbolise the living world. With the metaphor of the horse in view, the gods are also said to have beautified it. (d). Thus it will be realised that the superior status of the gods, in the origin as well as the growth of the sacrifice never appears to have been lost sight of by the Ṛgvedic poets.

Very rarely the expression of the mutual relationship between the gods and the sacrifice would appear to take the form of just a matter of mutual obligation or benefit as put in a more generalised manner very aptly by the Gītā (devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vaḥ III.11). We come across it, at RV.I.73.5 (sanema vājam.samitheṣu aryo bhāgam deveṣu śravase dadhānāḥ |), where the poet offers legitimate share to the gods from whatever has been won in the battles.

Beyond these general expressions about the relation of the gods in general with sacrifices, there are others which indicate some specific sacrificial association of some individual divinities. These, along with the specific sacrificial epithets, can be almost sure guides to determine the relative importance of the gods in the system of sacrifice.

As the hymns in general are meant for the propitiation of the divinities and as this was apparently sought to be done through the sacrificial performances, even the number of hymns written in honour of a particular divinity can be an indication of the general importance of that divinity in the sacrificial set-up of the time. What is

true of the number of hymns, is more so in the case of the sacrificial associations and epithets of the gods, which can give us a fairly correct picture of the general nature of the sacrificial system and the specific role of the divinity therein.

The reasons for it are quite obvious. The poets have been composing the hymns in a particular atmosphere, which is characterized by a set of ideas regarding the nature of the divinity and the way of propitiating it. Just as the riddle hymns like VIII.29 refer to certain general characteristic epithets and associations of some divinities so too we come across in the hymns certain sacrificial epithets and associations of the divinities. As the sacrifice has been growing under the eyes of the poets, their ideas and expressions are bound to be influenced by the sacrificial associations of the gods.

AGNI :

Thus, when we try to see the position of Agni in the Ṛgvedic sacrifice, we cannot fail to notice an outstanding feature of his role. Though as divinity, Agni was the end in view of the sacrifice, he was also looked upon as a means of performing the sacrifice. His former aspect entitled him to secure a place of equality along with the other gods. The latter aspect, as a means of sacrifice, could have however dragged him down to a position of subordination to the other gods. But, throughout the whole of the Ṛgveda, we do not come across any expression, which can be said to undermine the importance of Agni in his relation with the other deities. The large number of hymns in the Ṛgvedic collection, written in honour of Agni³ also indicates the fact that throughout the whole period of the growth of sacrifice, whatever the vicissitudes of the other gods, the importance of Agni never decreased, not even when the soma-cult and the Indra-worship attained prominence.

In a number of ways, the very intimate relationship of Agni with the sacrifice is expressed by the poets. As the sacrifice could be performed only with the help of Agni and as the gods depended entirely on Agni, to receive their share in the sacrifice, the gods are referred to as 'agnijivhāh' (I.44.14, 89.7; III.54.10; VI.21.11, 50.2, 52.13; VII.66.10; X.65.7). This is stated more specifically at (I.94.3, and II.1.13, *tve devā haviradanti āhutaṁ*) that the gods receive the oblations through him. Agni is also said to be bringing the gods for receiving the oblations in the sacrifices V.1.11 (*ā ca devān haviradyāya vakṣi*; cf. also VI.50.9 and VII.11.5). This dependence of the gods on Agni may give an impression of their weak position. To remove it, they are said to have established Agni for the sake of sacrifice (cf. II.4.3; III.29.7; VIII.19.2, *agnim devā dadhanvire*

3. Nearly 200 out of 1028.

adhvarāya). The idea is expressed more clearly by pointing out the advantageous position of Agni at VII.11.4 (agnirīṣe bṛhato adhvarasya, agnirviśvasya haviṣaḥ kṛtasya | kratuṁ hi asya vasavo juṣanta, atha devā dadhire havyavāhaṁ ||), where the gods are said to have ascertained the advantages of Agni's position and his ability and thereafter, to have established him as the carrier of oblations.

His epithet as the priest of the sacrifice (Hotā yajñasya) is apparently suggested by the similarity in function with that of the mortal priest. As such, he is said to be knowing the sacrifice (III.11.1, sa vedo yajñamānuṣak cf. also III.10.2, 11.1). But as Agni carries the oblations straight to the gods, he is said to be sacrificing to the gods earlier than the mortal priest (II.3.3, devān yakṣi mānuṣāt pūrvo adya) or in general, offering the sacrifice to the gods (II.3.3; III.9.7; V.21.1; VI.11.1; X.53.1). It is Agni who is said to be instrumental in successfully terminating the sacrifice and thus bringing the fruits of the sacrifice (IV.2.5 gomān avimān, āsvī. yajñāḥ). It is thus that he is said to be protecting the sacrifice (III.9.6, viśvān yadyajñān abhi pāsi mānuṣa and X.87.9. rakṣa yajñam). Sacrifice is said to be possible on account of him (V.13.4, tvayā yajñam vitanvate ||). Sacrifice is said to be made perfect on account of Agni (VI.10.1; VII.17.3,4). Agni is said to be assisting both at the beginning as well as the end of the sacrifice (VI.15.11, yajñasya vā niṣitīm voditīm vā tamit pṛnakṣi). Agni is asked to play a glorious role in the sacrifice (VI.16.2, adhware. . . . yajā. . . . mahaḥ) or raise the status of sacrifice (VII.2.7, ūrdhvaṁ no adhvaraṁ kṛtaṁ haveṣu) among others. He is said to be the best sacrificer (VII.3.1, yajīṣtha) and hence made the chief at the sacrifice (VII.7.4, sadyo adhware rathiraṁ jananta ||). His relationship in sacrifice, on one side with the gods and on the other with the human beings is vividly described at VII.9.1 (dadhāti ketumubhayasya jantoḥ | havyā deveṣu draviṇam sukṛtsu). His place in sacrifice is quite unique. He is the first among the gods as far as the sacrifice is concerned (VIII.23.18, devaḥ prathamo yajñīyo bhuvah) even though he is employed as a messenger by the gods (op.cit., viśve hi tvā sajoṣasaḥ devāso dūtamakrata ||). To make clear this point about Agni receiving the foremost oblation in the sacrifice apart from the other gods, a poet requests Agni to offer sacrifice to his self (VI.11.2d, agne yajasva tanvaṁ svayaṁ svām ||).

There are a number of epithets to indicate that the sacrifice started with Agni. In two exclusive epithets (X.140.5, adhvarasya iṣkartā) and (IV.7.3, adhvarasya haskartā), it is indicated that Agni being the originator, was the regulator of the sacrifice (cf. also 'yajñānām yantā' III.13.3, and 'yajñānām pitā', III.3.4). Manu is said to have laid him as the priest even like the gods (VI.16.9 hotā manurhitaḥ). To indicate his association with the sacrifice right from its

beginning, he is said to be the first priest (I.94.6, *pūrvyaḥ hotā*; VII.11.1, *prathamah hotā*; X.88.4, *prathamah devajusto hotā*; VIII.11.10, *hotā sanāt*). Similarly compare I.1.1, *yajñasya ṛtvik*; *yajñeṣu purohitaḥ* I.44.10. It may be noted here that when the epithets are exclusively used of Agni and when the poets employ the words 'īṣkartā' 'yantā' and 'pitā' to describe Indra,⁴ the word 'adhvarasya' is dropped, indicating the peculiar connection of Agni with the sacrifice, which Indra could never form.

As the sacrifice originated with Agni, he naturally came to be designated as the leader of the sacrifice. Thus he gets the epithets, 'adhvarasya praṇetā' (III.23.1), 'yajñasya netā' (II.5.2; III.15.4), 'adhvarāṇām rathiḥ' (I.44.2), 'yajñaṁ viśikṣuḥ' (II.1.10), 'yajña-niḥ' (I.15.12), 'adhvarāṇām samrāt' (I.27.1), 'adhvarāṇām abhiśriḥ' (VIII.44.7). His role in taking the sacrifice to the gods gave him the epithet 'Hotā' and he came to be referred to as 'hotā prathamah devajustaḥ' and 'pratnaḥ hotā' (II.7.6), 'īlaḥ prathamah hotā' (III.4.3), 'ṛtasya adhruk hotā' (X.61.14), 'purohitaḥ', 'puroyāvā', 'potā' (VII.16.12). As the kindling of fire came to symbolize the sacrificial performance, he came to be called 'adhvarāṇām anikaḥ' (X.2.6), 'yajñasya ketuḥ' (X.1.5, VIII.44.10, etc.), 'adhvarāṇām ketuḥ' (III.10.4), 'adhvarasya praketaḥ' (VII.11.1). As no sacrifice could be performed without Agni, he is said to be 'hotā viśveṣām yajñānām' (VI.16.11). This indicates that even with the predominance of Indra worship, the importance of Agni had not decreased. That the sacrificial performance could not be completed without Agni, is indicated by the denominative form 'adhvariyaḥ' exclusively used with Agni at II.1.2. His beneficent help in the sacrifices gives him the epithets 'adhvarasya śantamah' (I.77.2) or 'yajñānām abhiśasti-pāvā' (I.76.3), or 'yajña-sādhaḥ' (I.96.3), 'adhvareṣu sādhuḥ' (V.1.7), 'yajña-bandhuḥ' (IV.1.9). With long tradition of sacrifice in view, he came to be referred to as 'sanāt hotā' (VIII.11.10), 'yuge yuge havyavāhaḥ' (VI.15.8).

His association with a number of oblations, has given him the epithets like 'ghṛtānnaḥ' (VII.3.1), 'ghṛtakeśaḥ' (VIII.60.2), 'sarpir-annaḥ' (X.27.18), 'ghṛta-yoniḥ' (III.4.2, V.8.6), 'ghṛtasnuḥ' (V.26.2), 'soma-gopāḥ' (X.45.5) and in general 'viśvasya haviṣaḥ varenyaḥ hotā' (X.91.1). Occasional animal sacrifice is indicated by his epithets like 'ukṣānna', 'vaśānna' (VIII.43.11). It will be noted that the majority of epithets, based on 'ghṛta' indicate that it was 'ghṛta' that was actually offered in large quantities in fire. Soma, even though it was employed in sacrifices, was not actually poured in large quantities in fire⁵ and hence the paucity of epithets based on 'soma'. As he figured prominently in sacrifices where gifts were given by patrons, he came to be called 'Bhārataḥ' (Agni of the Bharatas) at

4. *īṣkartā* at VIII.1.2, 99.8; *Yantā* X.22.5; *Pitā* III.31.12 etc.

5. Cf. Chapter V below.

II.7.1, 'Daivodāsaḥ' at VIII.103.2. His association with the priestly families gives him epithets like 'aṅgīrastamaḥ' (I.31.2) 'kaṇvatamaḥ' and 'kaṇvasakhā' (X.115.5).

Even though Agni is usually said to be going to the gods, they are also said to be coming to him in order to emphasize the importance of Agni (X.20.6, *sa hi kṣemo haviryajñāḥ śruṣṭidasya gātureti | Agnim devā vāśimantam*).

Sacrifice had come to be conceived as being essential for the good of the society. This is indicated at II.35.12 (*asmai bahūnām avamāya yajñaiḥ vidhema*), where Agni is said to be worshipped with sacrifices for the good of all. This is made clear at a number of other places, emphasizing the role of Agni in those performances. Thus at II.2.1 (*dyukṣam hotāram vṛjaneṣu dhūrṣadam*), Agni's predominance in sacrifice is referred to. At X.2.3 (*so adhvarān kalpayāti*), Agni is said to be fashioning the sacrifices. In general sacrifices are said to be centring round him (V.9.2, *saṁ yajñasaḥ caranti yaṁ*). Indispensability of Agni in sacrifices is indicated at X.91.8 (*taminmahe vṛṇate nānyam tvat*). At X.4.1 (*dhanvanniva prapā asi tvamagne iyakṣave pūrave*), Agni is said to be the 'oasis' in the desert for the sacrificing people, indicating the gratefulness of the poet for the existence of Agni that is making the sacrificial performances possible.

It is this unique position of Agni in the sacrificial system as expounded above, that has maintained his importance in all the stages of the evolution of the sacrifice.

INDRA :

The number of hymns written in honour of Indra in the Rgveda,⁶ is indicative of his general importance in the midst of the Vedic pantheon, in the same way as of his importance in the system of sacrifice. Though he is so vitally associated with the growth of the sacrifice, all the hymns in his honour cannot be said to have been composed for the purposes of fresh sacrificial performances. In the case of some of the hymns like the Dānastutis, which are written specifically on the occasion of sacrificial performances in honour of Indra and some other divinities, as also of some other hymns (*vide Chapter XI*), the sacrificial association is quite obvious. But in the case of a large number of them, it cannot be said with any reasonable certainty how far they were meant for the sacrifice. At places, the poets refer to theirs as fresh compositions in honour of the divinity (*cf. VIII.26.1, uktham navīyaḥ*).⁷ After the composition of new hymns, we do not know how often they were employed for the sacrificial performances. The 'soma' hymns in the ninth Maṇḍala would indicate very possibly that those hymns were composed for

6. Nearly one-fourth of the total number.

7. For the idea of Indra being asked to compose a hymn, *cf. VI.18.15 and Chapter II.*

fresh performances as they very often repeat the same ideas about the process of pressing out the soma juice.

As the 'soma' hymns are mainly associated with Indra, his predominant position in the growth of the sacrifice can be easily realised. At whichever stage, Indra and Soma may have come to be associated with the sacrifice, the latter has grown in importance rapidly on association with them. This popularity of Indra worship indicates the fact that the god's help was solicited frequently on account of the prevalence of pretty unsettled condition of life, necessitating almost constant warfare, wherein the help of the warlike god was essential. Thus, in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, we find the sacrifice appearing dominant on account of its relation with Indra but when life had settled down and the help of Indra was not required to the same extent, the importance of Indra steadily decreased, sacrifice retaining its importance for quite different reasons. In a general way, we can say that the sacrifice was growing with the idea of divinity in the *Ṛgveda*. The emphasis was however shifted in the days of the *Brāhmaṇas* and hence the god came to be relegated to a secondary position in the system of sacrifice during that period.

In the days of the *Ṛgvedic* hymns however, the importance of Indra among the gods of the *Ṛgvedic* pantheon as well as in the system of sacrifice can be noticed obviously. It appears to have been confirmed by the opposition that the Indra-cult had to face. The efforts of the opponents of the Indra worship and the sacrifice⁸ appear to have worked towards its stabilisation by the *sthūpā-nikhanana nyāya*.⁹

The intimate association of Indra with the sacrifice is indicated by significant epithets and expressions, next in profusion only to those going with Agni.

The popularity of Indra and the sacrifice appear to have grown side by side. The simplicity of the approach to the warrior god, reflects the simplicity of the mode of worshipping him or the simplicity of the sacrifice.

Even though the most impressive of the sacrificial performances appear to be those in honour of Indra and though the profusion of the offering of the rich soma-juice is said to be delightful to him, the soma-juice does not appear to be indispensable for approaching him. Among the rival patrons, he may be preferring the oblations of the more liberal soma-presser but he does not appear to be distinguishing between his worshippers in general. This aspect of the relationship between the worshippers and Indra, has been rightly

8. Vide Chapter IX below.

9. The maxim of shaking the post to make it firm in the pit.

expounded as the 'devotion' of the later days.¹⁰ Thus it is said at I.101.6 (yaḥ śūrebhirhavyo yaśca bhirubhiryo dhāvadbhirhūyate yaśca jigyubhiḥ |) that Indra can be worshipped by people of all abilities and temperaments. X.105.4 (sacāyorindraścarkṛṣa ān upā-nasaḥ saparyan) describes him as accepting the oblations as soon as he would come across a worshipper. If Indra's popularity were not known, this would give an impression that Indra-worship was not popular, but this merely appears to indicate the simplicity and the loving nature of the god.

It is indicated in a number of places as to how the popularity of sacrifice has grown by the influence and assistance of Indra. Thus, Indra is said to have helped the sacrificial performances (III.10.15b, yajñāya śikṣa grṇate sakhibhyaḥ) or prospered them (III.40.3, yajñampratira). At the same time, the sacrifice is also said to have helped Indra (III.32.12, yajño hi te Indra vardhano bhūt; VI.38.4, vardhāt yaṁ Indram yajñāḥ; cf. also VI.40.4, VIII.12.20, 13.17, etc.), or his thunderbolt (III.32.12d, yajñaste vajram ahihatye āvat).

Indra is said to be making the sacrifice mighty (IV.23.1, mahām avṛdhat hoturyajñam). Indra's help to the sacrificer is referred to at VI.28.2 (Indro yajvane prṇate ca śikṣati uped dadāti na svam muṣayati | bhūyo bhūyo rayimasya vardhayan), where a touch of his genuine affection for the worshipper is to be seen. Indra is said to be very frequently praised in the sacrifices (VI.34.2, ekaḥ puru-praśasto asti yajñaiḥ |). Sacrifice is said to be delighting him (VIII.13.11 (yajñāḥ) śamiddhi te). He is said to be foremost among the gods to come and receive offerings in the sacrifices at VI.41.1cd (gāvo na vajrin svamoko accha Indra āgahi prathamō yajñīyānām), where his eagerness for the offerings and affection for the worshippers are conveyed by his comparison with the cows returning homeward. Indra's feat in eliminating the non-Aryans is comparable only with his another feat in giving significant impetus to the sacrifice, cf. III.53.2 (Hativī dasyūn prāryam varṇamāvat), where he is said to have protected the Aryans by striking down the Dasyus and VIII.6.22 (tavendra praṇītiṣu yajño vitantasāyyaḥ) and VIII.68.11 (yasya te svādu sakhyaṁ svādvī praṇītiradrivaḥ | yajño vitanta-sāyyaḥ), where in almost identical terms, different poets are referring to the leadership of Indra which led to continuous sacrificial performances and his agreeable friendship therefore.

The sacrificial epithets of Indra indicate his relationship with the sacrifice in general and the soma in particular. It is interesting to note how their epithets based on the association with the Aṅgiras family indicate the distinctive roles of Indra and Agni in the sacrificial performances. Thus, with the function of Agni, similar to that of

10. RBV (Marāṭhī) 1952.

the priest of the sacrifice in view, Agni is identified with the *Āngirasas*. He is called '*Āngirāḥ*' (I.31.17, 74.5, IV.3.15, etc.) or '*Āngirāḥ ṛṣiḥ prathamah*' (I.31.1) or '*Āngirasām jyeṣṭhah*' (I.127.2) or '*Āngirāstamah*' (I.75.2, etc.). While, though Indra is said to be '*Āngirāstamah*' at two places (I.100.4 and 130.3), very possibly because of his association with Agni (cf. Indra is called Agni at V.34.9), his position as the deity of the sacrifice, as one who is meant to receive the oblations and praises in the sacrifice appears to be always foremost in the mind of the poet. Thus, because of the constant association of the *Āngiras* family with the Indra-soma ritual, he is said to be '*Āngirasvān*' (II.11.20, VI.17.6). But unlike Agni his separate existence from the family as one who is to favour them on account of their worship, is clearly referred to. Thus he is said to be sung by the *Āngirasas* ('*Āngirobhiḥ gṛṇānah*' II.15.8; IV.16.8; X.111.4) and as one who accepts the prayers of the *Āngirasas* ('*Āngirasām ucathā juṣṣvān*' II.20.5).

In a general way, he is said to be the protector of the singers or sacrificers (*avitā kārudhāyāḥ*, VI.44.15; *avitā vidhantām*, VIII.2.36; *avitā sunvataḥ vṛktabarhiṣaḥ*, VIII.36.1). Agni is however said to be merely a protector in general (III.19.5, X.7.7) or the protector of sacrifice (III.21.3).

Indra appears to be a god with strong likes and dislikes as far as sacrifice is concerned. Thus he is said to be eager for people, who offer soma-juice ('*sutasomam icchan*', V.30.1, VII.98.1; '*sakhā sunvataḥ*', I.4.10, VIII.32.13) as he is eager for soma-juice ('*uśan somam*', IV.24.6, VII.98.2; '*suteṣu raṇitā*', VIII.96.19) and prosper them (*sunvataḥ vṛdhaḥ*, V.34.6, VIII.98.5) by accepting their soma-pressing ('*juṣāṇaḥ savanam*', III.32.5, X.160.2). But he hates the people who do not press the soma juice (V.34.6, '*asunvato viṣuṇaḥ*').

He is said to know the sacrifice (*adhvarasya praketaḥ*, X.104.6) or to be the bearer of sacrifices (*yajñavāhāḥ*, VIII.12.20). He is said to be growing on account of sacrifice ('*yajñavṛddhaḥ*', VI.21.2 or '*somavṛddhaḥ*', VII.39.7, VI.19.5) or accepting the sacrifice (*juṣāṇaḥ hotuḥ yajñam*, IV.23.1).

In this way, whereas Agni could be looked upon as a part of the sacrifice, though occupying a unique position therein, Indra appears to be considered as the guiding spirit of the sacrifice. In fact, it can be said that if Agni is the body of the sacrifice, Indra is its soul. Sacrifice could not have originated if Agni would not have been there. But after origination, it could not have prospered if Indra would not have been there.

The source of Indra's inspiration was the soma-juice and hence the majority of his epithets are based on his association with the soma juice. As drinker of soma juice, he is said to be '*papiḥ somam*'

(VI.23.4), 'pāpivān sutasya' (V.29.2), 'paprih andhasaḥ' (I.52.3), 'pātā sutam' (VI.23.3) or 'pātā somānām' (VI. 93.3), 'sutapāḥ' (IV.25.7), 'sutapāvan' (VI.24.9, VIII.2.7), 'somapāḥ' (I.10.3, etc.), 'soma-pātamaḥ' (VI.42.2, etc.). With very intimate association with soma in view, he is called 'somya' (IV.25.2) and is even referred to as 'soma' (VIII.78.8). He is said to be possessed of 'soma' ('somin', VIII.62.1) or eager for soma ('soma-kāmaḥ', II.14.2; 'vāvaśānaḥ somam, III.35.9) and is naturally the lord of soma ('somapatiḥ' III. 32.1, V.40.1, VIII.21.3; 'patiḥ somānām VIII.93.33; 'rājā pradivaḥ sutānām' III.47.1. cf. also VI.37.2, VI.20.3). With the general overlordship of Indra in view, he is said to be the lord of soma, even before it is pressed. (cf. VIII.64.3, tvamīśiṣe sutānām tvamasutānām |).

His continuous association with the sacrifice, indicative of frequent sacrificial performances in his honour by different people, is responsible for giving him the epithet "puruḥūta".¹¹ For the same reason, at III.35.7, 'Barhis' (the sacrificial grass) is said to be his abode. Here the poet describes the preparations made for Indra and his horses (stīrṇam barhiḥ suta Indra somaḥ | kṛtā dhānā attave te haribhyām) and thus with the sacred grass as his abode, Indra is said to be offered the oblations (tadokase puruṣākāya vṛṣṇe, marutvate tubhyaṁ rātā havīmīṣi |). Unlike other gods, he was invoked in all the 'savana' (soma-pressings)¹² and hence he is said to be foremost among all who receive the sacrificial offerings (X.50.4, yajñīyaḥ viśveṣu savaneṣu and hence VIII.96.4, yajñīyānām yajñīyaḥ). The popularity of sacrifice in honour of Indra and the charm that his name exercised are indicated at V.30.5 (śrutyam nāma bibhrat) and VI.18.8, where he is referred to as 'sumantunāmā'.

The ample soma juice offered to Indra in continuous performances gives him the epithet 'a vessel for placing the soma-juice' (VI.69.6, Kalaśaḥ somadhānaḥ). Indrāvāyū are also similarly referred to (VI.69.2, kalaśā somadhānā), apparently for the same reason. Indra is said to be growing on account of incessant sacrificial performances (VIII.24.18, aprāyubhīryajñebhiḥ vāvṛdhenyam |).

The idea of simplicity of approach or devotion towards the divinity has been stressed as required in the sacrificial performance and not merely the fact of his being an Aryan or a non-Aryan. Thus at X.86.19 (ayamemi vicākaśad vicinvan dāsamāryam | pibāmi pākasutvanaḥ), Indra is said to be distinguishing between the Dāsas and the Āryas but choosing the performance of a simple minded person only.

Thus it will have been observed that in the approach to the divinity, there is no emphasis on the mechanism of performance but rather on the sentiment. It is this aspect of the Indra-worship, which

11. Employed about sixty times in the R̥gveda.

12. Cf. Chapter V for 'Savana'.

must have appealed to the minds of the majority of the people and won them over towards the worship, in turn increasing the popularity of the sacrifice in general.

SOMA :

In a broad way, it can be said that the two-fold aspect of soma, viz., as the material of the sacrifice as well as the divinity are almost inseparably mixed up. We cannot very clearly mark out any hymns or portions thereof as being in description of the one or the other aspect. It appears that as the material of sacrifice, which captured the imagination of the Aryans, who took more and more to sacrificial performances therewith, soma attained a special degree of importance, which no other material could hope to attain and it is for this reason that it came to be associated with divinity at an early stage of the sacrifice.

In a way, Agni and soma can be compared in respect of their position in the sacrifice.

Both of them have a very significant place in the material set-up of the sacrifice but at the same time, they have divinity associated with them. The process of churning fire from the *Araṇis* as well as the pressing of the soma juice from the plant have been described in detail very frequently in the hymns. Both of them are also described as instrumental in bringing the gods to the sacrifice. But their points of difference are also quite obvious. Agni's divinity is natural, while soma has come to be ascribed divinity due to the peculiar circumstances under which the soma-ritual grew in importance in the days of the *R̥gveda*. Even regarding their role in the sacrifice, Agni's speciality lies in going to the gods either to invite them or to carry offerings to them; while soma has to remain at the place of sacrifice and attract the divinities towards the sacrificial performance. This influence of soma however has grown to such an extent that it has come to occupy a place in the fancy of the *R̥gvedic* poets, next in importance only to Agni as is also indicated by the number of hymns in his honour.¹³ Thus too, the number of hymns becomes an indication of the importance of a divinity in the sacrificial system.

The epithets and expressions connected with soma as the divinity or the material of the sacrifice are quite mixed up, though some of them have significance only when soma is considered as the divinity. Thus like Agni and Indra, Soma is called '*Āṅgīrastama*' (IX. 107.6), indicating the association of the *Āṅgīras* family with the soma-ritual, perhaps as the originators of the same.¹⁴ Some epithets

13. Nearly 120 as compared with 200 in honour of Agni.

14. For *Āṅgīrasas* cf. Chapter VII below.

indicate the unique place of 'soma' in the sacrifice. cf. IX.2.10, 6.8, *Ātmā yajñasya pūrvyah*; IX.7.3, *'Agriyah*'; IX.86.45 *'Agregah*'; etc.¹⁵ They can be construed with both the aspects of 'soma'. Some of them however can be significant only with the divinity of 'soma' in view. cf. IX.48.4, *'ṛtasya gopāh*'; IX.96.13, *'ṛtāvā*'; IX.42.5, *'ṛtāvṛdhah*'; IX.86.10, 87.2, *'devānām janitā*'; IX.86.10, 109.4, *'devānām pitā*'; IX.96.6, *'devānām brahmā*'.

AŚVINS :

Like Indra and soma, they are referred to as *'Āngirasvantā*' (VIII.35.14), indicating the association of Aśvins with the soma-ritual. Their worship by the Jamadagni family is also referred to (VIII.101.8, *'gr̥nānā jamadagninā*). Like Indra and Agni, they are said to be knowing the sacrifice and bearing the burden of the sacrifice (VIII.10.4, *'pracetasā adhvarasya yajñasya*' and I.15.11, *yajñavāhasā*). Popularity of their worship is indicated by their being called *'puru-hūta*' like Indra (VI.63.1)¹⁶ and *'asmayū*' (VII.74.4) along with Indra and Soma. Their association with the R̥bhus¹⁷ gives them the epithet *'ṛbhumantā*' (VIII.35.15). They are said to be going to the sacrifice (VI.62.2, *cakramānā yajñam ā*), brightening the sacrifices (VIII.8.18, *adhvarānām rājantau*) and prove to listen to the invocations (V.75.5, VIII.8.7, *'havana-śrutā*'). Their association with the soma-ritual gives them a number of epithets. (I.46.12, *'pipratau made somyasya*') delighting in the soma-juice; (III.58.7, *'juṣānā tiro-anhyam*), accepting the overnight-kept soma-juice. Their drink of soma or honey gives them the epithets, *'madhūyuvā*' (V.73.8, 74.9), *'madhupau*' (I.119.9); as a result of it, they are also said to be of the colour of soma or honey, *'madhuvarṇau*' (VIII.26.6). Their chariot is said to be inspired by the pressing-stones on account of their association with the soma-pressing (III.39.8, *'adrijūta*') or proceeding along the path of ghee, (VII.69.1, *'ghṛtavartaniḥ*; V.77.3, *'ghṛtasnuḥ*'). The epithet *'sindhumātarā*' (I.46.2) very possibly signifies the river Sindhu being the place of origin of their worship. It may be noted that the epithet *'sindhumātar'* is used of Soma, Maruts and Saraswatī and the association with soma-ritual is indicated at IX.61.7 (*mṛjanti tam daśa kṣipo...*). At X.78.6 and VII.36.6, the word *'sindhu'* appears to be used in the sense of the river of that name. As the river Saraswatī is known for sacrificial association,¹⁸ and as Maruts are associated with Indra and thereby with the soma-ritual, the epithet concerned has apparently got the sacrificial association in view.

15. For details cf. Chapter V under 'Soma'.

16. Their chariot is also called *'puru-hūta*' at X.41.2.

17. R̥bhus fashioning a chariot for Aśvins 1.20.3^{ab}.

18. Cf. Saraswatī in Chapter IV.

The reference to the help rendered by Áśvins to Ātharvaṇa Dadhyac (cf. I.80.16, 116.12, 139.9; VI.16.14; IX.108.4), in order to know the secret of the chant known to him also indicates the existence of the soma-chant of mystical significance in connection with the soma-ritual, with which they were associated. It may be noted that the association of Dadhyac with soma is referred to at IX.108.4 (yenā navagvā dadhyānaporṇute). At VI.16.14 Dadhyac is referred to as the son of Atharvan, who has clear association with the growth of Ṛgvedic ritual.¹⁹ At I.139.9, Dadhyac is mentioned along with Atri, Kaṇva, Priyamedha and Aṅgirasas—all of them connected with the ritual of the time. At I.80.16, the sacrificial rite and hymn with which Dadhyac is associated is referred to (yāmātharvā manuṣ-pitā dadhyañ dhiyamānata tasmin brahmāṇi....).

Some epithets used of the chariot and the horses of Áśvins also indicate their association with sacrifice. Thus, their chariot is said to be 'madhuvāhanaḥ' (I.34.2, 157.3), 'madhunaḥ dṛtiḥ' (IV.45.1), etc. and the horses are said to be 'ṛtayujaḥ' and 'madhumantaḥ' (VII.71.3).

Áśvins appear to be mainly associated with the morning sacrifice as their epithet 'prātaryāvāṇā' (V.77.1, II.39.2), repeated in the case of their horses as 'uṣarbudhaḥ' (I.92.18; IV.45.4) and the chariot as 'prātaryāvā' (X.40.1) 'prātaryuj' (X.41.2), would indicate.

They are said to have inspired worship among people from very ancient times and it appears to have extended over a wide region as indicated at VIII.7.21 (na hi śma yaddha vaḥ purā stomebhir vṛktabarhiṣaḥ | śardhāñ ṛtasya jīnvatha). In the preceding stanza (v.20), the poet has raised the point of their possible detention elsewhere (kva nu madathāḥ), indicating that it was worship offered elsewhere (brahmā ko vaḥ saparyati); he continues by remarking in v.21 that, it was possibly on account of the people, whom they had inspired to sacrifice in old days. The reference to 'brahmā' may indicate that the worship originated with the Aryans though it is known to be associated with the non-Aryans too from very old days.

The association of Áśvins with the non-Aryan worshippers is indicated elsewhere.²⁰ As Áśvins are said to be going to far-off places (cf. VIII.5.31) to accept the gifts of the Dāsa worshippers and staying there, it appears that the worship has spread to those places. This appears to have become possible mainly because of the essential nature of the Áśvins as the helpers or the healers. There are all sorts of people among their proteges. As Indra is known for his manly deeds (paumsya or Indriya), Áśvins are known for their helping deeds.²¹

19. Vide 'Atharvan', Chapter VII.

20. Cf. I.47.7 and VIII.5.31 discussed in Chapter VIII.

21. Cf. I.112 where the 'Ūtis' are stressed.

Though the individual existence of the two Áśvins is not as clearly referred to as in the case of the three Ṛbhu brothers, they are known to be different (cf. I.181.4, *iheha jātā samavāvaśītāmarepasā tanvā nāma bhiḥ svaiḥ | jiṣṇurvāmanyāḥ sumakhasya sūrirdivo anyāḥ subhagaḥ putra ūhe ||*) where they are said to have their own bodies and names. Their distinction is made clearer in cd, where one of them is said to be connected with the sacrifice and the other as the son of the Heaven. This would indicate that they were almost considered to have divine origin and their distinction was not such as could be distinctly specified. It is possible therefore, that they have also attained divinity in a similar way as the Ṛbhū. It is significant that the epithet 'nara', which is used with Indra (indicating his manly strength) and Indrāgnī about twenty times and with Maruts for the same reason about 18 times, is used of Áśvins about sixty times in the Ṛgveda. Remembering the fact that Áśvins are not known for their manly strength and that they have helped people from all strata of society, it is possible that the epithet signifies their human origin and that they have been deified on account of their miraculous deeds in general and sacrificial service in particular, which perhaps proved to be a precedent for ascribing divinity to the Ṛbhū.

Out of all the deeds of the Áśvins, the one that appears to have vital connection with the evolution of the sacrifice was the one, where they are said to have secured the secret of the soma-chant through Dadhyac (I.116.12). Their association with the soma-ritual is also indicated by reference to the Janhāvī prajā, offering them (savanas) thrice a day (I.116.19, *trirahno bhāgaṁ dadhatīm...*). Regarding the 'madhu' or the soma-chant, it is referred to as a secret of Tvaṣṭṛ (I.117.22, *sa vām madhu pra vocadṛtāyan, tvāṣṭraṁ yadda-srāvapikakṣyaṁ vām*). This reference brings the story nearer to that of the Ṛbhū.²² The deeds of the Ṛbhū and Áśvins are almost similar in point of miraculousness. In fact, Ṛbhū may appear to be associates of Áśvins as is suggested by their fashioning a chariot for them (I.20.3). The most significant deed of the Ṛbhū is to make the cup of Tvaṣṭṛ into four, while Áśvins are said to have taken away a secret of sacrificial importance from Tvaṣṭṛ. Both these references indicate the importance of Tvaṣṭṛ in the evolution of the soma-ritual, which appears to have been amended by Áśvins and the Ṛbhū to a certain extent.

Thus Áśvins appear to have played a significant role in the evolution of the soma-sacrifice and as such continue to be associated with the soma-ritual (cf. I.34.3, 47.4, *madhvā yajñam mimikṣatam*). They are associated with the soma-sacrifice of the Kaṇva and Pajra

22. Cf. my paper on Ṛbhū (B.U.J. Vol. XXI September 1952).

families (I.47.2, 10; I.117.10). A simile employed at I.116.24 (somamiva sruveṇa) would also suggest the same fact.

TVASṬR AND ṚBHUS :

Ṛbhū are said to have fashioned the sacrifice in association with Pūṣan (III.54.12cd, Pūṣanvanta ṛbhavo mādayadhvamūrdhva-grāvāno adhvaramataṣṭa). That the Ṛbhū were human beings, who came to be associated with divinity on account of their significant service to the evolution of soma-ritual by fashioning four cups in place of the earlier one by Tvaṣṭr, has been amply stressed in the Ṛbhū hymns.²³ Tvaṣṭr's role in the evolution of the sacrifice at an earlier stage has been indicated above and it is possible that Tvaṣṭr also had come to be associated with divinity like the Ṛbhū at the time.

VARUṆA :

The influence of Varuṇa in the sphere of individual as well as social morality is quite well known. It is through him that the ideas about religion and ethics came to be co-ordinated in the conception of Ṛta, which was predominantly associated with him. It is possible that the Ṛta dwindled down in importance along with Varuṇa. At one stage, Ṛta must have influenced the idea of divinity as well as of the sacrifice. The gods are said to be born in Ṛta (ṛtejāḥ), protectors of Ṛta (ṛtapāḥ), growing on account of Ṛta (ṛtāvṛdhaḥ) etc. and as the idea of gods was developing along with the idea of sacrifice, the influence of Ṛta on the idea of sacrifice can be self-evident. But with the change in the emphasis on the nature of the ultimate reality, shifting gradually in the direction of the divinities, this abstract idea of Ṛta could not culminate into a unique reality as it would have done otherwise. The transition from the idea of individual divinity to joint-divinities, to all-divinities-as-one (viśvedevas) idea, to a creator divinity or divinities (Prajāpati or Viśvakarman), to concrete unitary principles like Puruṣa and Hiraṇyagarbha, indicates the gradual change in the emphasis from the initial idea of divinity. This must have gradually detracted the attention of the thinkers from the Ṛta and by the time the more searching investigation was directed towards the abstract principle in the Nāsadiya Sūkta (X.129), the idea of Ṛta seems to have already lost its enviable place in the thought-world of the Aryans.

Varuṇa has no doubt been associated with the soma ritual (I.24.11, tadāśāste yajamāno havirbhiḥ), where the sacrificers are said to be

23. I. 20; I. 110, 111; I. 161; III. 60; IV. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37; VII. 48. For a detailed discussion of the hymns cf. my paper "Ṛbhū in the Rgvedic sacrifice" (B.U.J. Vol. XXI 1952). For Tvaṣṭr also cf. Chapter IV under 'camasa'.

offering oblations to him or (I.24.17, *yato me madhvābhṛtaṁ hoteva kṣadase*), where 'soma' is said to be offered to him. As the creative principle, he is said to have deposited 'soma' on the mountain (V.85.2, *adadhāt somamadrau*). Some chant of mystical significance is associated with him at (VII.87.4, *uvāca me varuṇo medhirāya*, etc.) which is said to have remained an exclusive secret with him. In association with Mitra, he is said to be receiving offerings of *ghṛta*. Thus *Mitrā-varuṇā* are said to be '*ghṛtayoni*' at V.68.2, '*ghṛtasnū*' at I.153.1, '*ghṛtācīm dhiyaṁ sādhanā*' at I.2.7, '*ghṛtānnau*' at VI.67.8 and '*ghṛtāsuti*' at I.136.1 and II.41.5.

These few references however do not indicate any great importance attached to him in the sacrificial set-up. It is quite possible to imagine that Varuṇa was an older divinity, associated with sacrifice at an earlier stage because the idea of the divinity existed from very ancient times. This ancient character of Varuṇa is apparently indicated by references to Indra, Agni and Aśvins as younger gods. Thus whereas Varuṇa is said to have planted the soma-plant on the mountain (V. 85.2, see above), Indra is said to be drinking soma-juice as soon as he was born (I.61.7, III.32.9, 10; 48.2, 3; VII.98.3).

As an ancient divinity, sacrifice came to be associated with Varuṇa with the earlier offering of *ghṛta*²⁴ as is indicated above; but the sphere of his activity being different, he could never attain a significant place in the growing ritual. His association with *Ṛta* must have influenced the idea of sacrifice and provided a theoretical basis for it. But as the sacrifice began to grow more in its practical outlook than was associated with Varuṇa and the *Ṛta*, Varuṇa does not appear to have caught the popular fancy as did the warlike god Indra. The popularity of soma-juice as an offering in the sacrifice must have brought Indra into prominence. Though soma has been associated with Varuṇa, it does not appear to have been a popular offering with him partly because of the old association of *ghṛta* and partly because of the intoxicating character of the drink, which could not quite fit in his association with *Ṛta*. And thus it appears that with the growing popularity of Indra and the soma-ritual, Varuṇa and the idea of *Ṛta* faded into insignificance.

UṢAS :

With their worship of Indra and Aśvins, Aṅgirasas appear to have promoted the worship of Uṣas too, as she is designated '*Aṅgira-stamā*' (VII.79.3). With the morning sacrifices in view, she is said to be the first in the invocations (I.123.2, *pūrvahūtau prathamā*) or leading the sacrifice (VI.65.2, *nayanti ṛtasya agram*) and therefore she is said to be 'the banner of sacrifice' (I.113.19, *ketuḥ yajñasya*).

24. Vide '*ghṛta*' in Chapter V.

But beyond these few references, she does not appear to have been instrumental in any significant way in the growth of sacrifice in the days of the Ṛgveda.²⁵

MARUTS :

Maruts are associated with a number of sacrificial epithets, very possibly on account of their association with Agni and Indra, though their place in the Ṛgvedic pantheon as well as the sacrifice appears to be one of secondary importance. They are said to be going to the sacrifices (III.26.6, *yajñam gantāraḥ*), associated with the sacrifices (II.36.2, *yajñaiḥ sammiślāḥ*) or as bearing the burden of the sacrifices (I.86.2, *yajñavāhasaḥ*) and therefore being the glory of the sacrifices (*adhvaraśriyaḥ*, X.78.7).

Their association with Agni and the sacrifice wins them the epithets '*agnīśriyaḥ*' at III.26.5 and *ghṛtapruṣaḥ*' at X.78.4. They are referred to as sacrificers, indicating their subordinate role (I.39.9, VIII.7.33, '*prayajyuḥ*'; I.86.7, V.55.1; 87.1; VI.48.20, '*prayajyavaḥ*', '*subarhiṣaḥ*' at VIII.20.25, '*vṛktabarhiṣaḥ*' at I.38.1, VIII.7.20 and '*yatasrucaḥ*' at II.34.11. Their association with a priestly family gives them an exclusive epithet '*sobhariyavaḥ*'. Poetically, they are said to be worshipping in the heaven (V.54.1, *diva ā prṣṭhayajvane mārutāya*...). Their worship in the sacrifices, where they are said to be assuming sacrificial names²⁶ is referred to at I.72.3, 87.5, '*nāmāni cid dadhire yajñiyāni*'; VI.48.21, *tveṣam śavo dadhire nāma yajñiyam*.

A number of other divinities were also apparently worshipped in the sacrifices but none of them appears to have promoted the sacrifice in a very marked way to evoke any significant epithets. They are given epithets, already used of other divinities. Thus Rudra is said to be '*medhapati*' (I.43.4), '*yajñasādhaḥ*' (I.114.4), '*hotā*' (IV.3.1). Pūṣan is said to be '*ṛtasya rathiḥ*' (VI.55.1), Viṣṇu is said to be '*ghṛtāsutiḥ*' (I.156.1). Āditya is said to be '*prathamah purohitaḥ*' (X.66.13) and Ādityas are said to be '*agnijivhāḥ*' (III.54.10) and *adribarhāḥ*' (X.63.3).

Though none of these gods individually appears to have played any significant role in the sacrifice, the group of Viśvedevas appears to mark an important stage in the growth of the religious as well as the sacrificial system.

VIŚVEDEVAS :

In general, it is recognised that the conception of Viśvedevas has been introduced for the purposes of the sacrifice.²⁷ But it does

25. RVB pp. 69-74, where he tries to see sacrificial association with the epithets of Uṣas. Cf. also '*Dakṣiṇā*' in Chapter V below and RVL pp. 332 F.N. 3.

26. Cf. Chapter X.

27. VMM. p. 130; RIH p. 137; ASL pp. 281-82; RVL p. 298.

not appear to have been realised that it was a purposeful innovation introduced by the thinkers of the time to serve the cause of sacrifice in particular.

As Max Muller believes,²⁸ the idea of Viśvedevas was apparently later in origin. It appears to have been necessitated by the stress of circumstances. It can be understood that when the worship of individual gods was developing, some ideas about their relative importance must be occurring to the minds of the worshippers. It was quite natural that the different worshippers would consider their divinities as greater. As a result, there must have arisen a clash of ideas, affecting the course of sacrificial performances. In a way, this ideological clash must have given an impetus to the idea of sacrifice, which the votaries must have started pursuing more vehemently. But the thinkers of the time must have realised this tendency to be harmful to the general progress of the sacrifice.

Though it cannot be said with any precision, the idea of the joint divinities like *Indrāgnī*, *Mitrā-Varuṇā*, etc., appears to be earlier in origin than that of the *Viśvedevas*. In the field of the growth of religious and philosophical thought, it led the way to the growth of the idea of one divinity and that of unity.²⁹ In the field of sacrifice, it removed all the causes of friction and smoothened the course of sacrifices. It can thus be realised as to how sacrifice has influenced the growth of the religious as well as the philosophical thought of the time.

Of all the gods in the *Viśvedevā* group, *Agni* appears to have retained his place of importance, being indispensable for sacrificial performances. But the form of worship as it was associated with one divinity or the other was changing as is indicated at I.105.4 (*yajñam prcchāmi avamaṁ sa taddūto vivocati | kva ṛtaṁ pūrvaṁ gataṁ, kastad bibharti nūtanam*), where the poet is referring to the disappearance of older form of worship and the existence of the newer one. In a following verse also, the poet appears to be indicating the difficulties in the way of a person concerned with the sacrifice. (cf. v.7, *aham so asmi yaḥ purā sute vadāmi kāni cit | taṁ mām vyanti ādhyah vṛko na tṛṣṇajam mṛgam ||*), where the poet indicates his knowledge of the past ritual but expresses his anxieties about the growing ritual, which he does not appear to appreciate fully.³⁰ An attempt to regulate the mode of worship can be observed at VI.52.1 (*ni hīyatāmatiyājasya yaṣṭā*), where a person overstepping the usual limits in the mode of performance (*atiyāja*) is censured.

The common mode of worship of the various divinities in the *Viśvedevā* group must have been of a pretty liberal type, where

28. ASL p. 281.

29. RVL p. 297.

30. Cf. also III. 55.3.

all the gods would be attached equal importance and thus would be expected to give equal gifts.

Among the various epithets employed about the Viśvedevas, their common agreement and ability to give equal gifts appear to be the most significant. Thus with perfect accord, they are said to be kindling the (sacrificial) fire (cf. X.101.1, *udbudhyadhvaṃ samanasah sakhāyaḥ samagnimindhvaṃ bahavaḥ saniḷāḥ* |). Their agreement was a pre-condition of their common worship and hence it is emphasized at VIII.27.10 (*asti hi vaḥ sajātyaṃ riśādaso devāso astyāpyaṃ* |) where their kinship and friendship have been referred to. (cf. similarly 'sajośasaḥ' at X. 126.1). At III.8.8, with common agreement, they are said to be protecting the sacrifice and raising it up (cf. *sajośaso yajñamavantu devā ūrdhvaṃ kṛṇvantvadhvarasya ketuṃ*). This common agreement was apparently essential on account of some clash about their relative greatness.

It appears that the growth of the Indra ritual had eclipsed completely other rituals for some time; and therefore there was some opposition to his worship inspite of his greatness.³¹ With the growth of the Viśvedevā group, some must have liked to worship him along with others. But with Maruts as his associates (whose leader he is represented to be, cf. 'Indra-jyeṣṭhāḥ marudgaṇāḥ' I.23.8, II.41.15), he seems to have swept the field of sacrifice. This must have created some heart-burning among the votaries of other gods, who must have sponsored the idea of equal status for all the gods. As the volume of general opinion must have been growing in favour of the idea of Viśvedevas, it was necessary to allow Indra to be included in the Viśvedevā group. With his sweeping influence, however, his equality with all other gods could not be emphasized. At least it does not appear to have been conceded by some, who wanted a distinctive status for Indra on account of his towering greatness. It is possibly thus that Indra has come to be represented as the head of the Viśvedevā group at a number of places. (cf. IV.54.5, VI.51.15, VII.11.5, VIII.63.12, 83.9, X. 66.1, 70.4). Viśvedevas are said to be inspired by Indra at V.66.2 (*Indraprasūtāḥ*).

Indra may have retained his general importance later but Indra-worship must not have risen to greater heights after the rise of the Viśvedevā group in the field of religion and sacrifice. Thus has the emphasis changed from the greatness of Indra to the greatness of all the gods in general, as is indicated by a characteristic hymn in the Rgveda (III.55), where the refrain (cf. *Mahaddevānāmasuratvamekaṃ*) emphasizes the greatness of all the gods. All the gods are said to be equally great without any distinction whatsoever at VIII. 30.1 (cf. *na hi vo astyarthako devāso na kumārakah viśve sato mahānta it* |).

31. Cf. the view of 'anindras' referred to in Chapter IX.

This Viśvedevā worship was centred round Agni as can be inferred from the description in X.52, where Viśvedevas are said to have established Agni (V.1, aukṣaṇ ghṛtairastrīṇaṇ barhiraśmā ādīd hotāraṁ nyasādayanta) and wherein Agni explains as to how he was chosen as the priest. It is also supported by VIII.58.1 (yamṛtvijo bahudhā kalpayantaḥ sacetaso yajñamimaṁ vahanti), where the poets are said to be carrying on with the sacrifice by looking upon Agni even as they do upon other gods. This would clearly indicate how the conception of Viśvedevas was considered quite essential for the purposes of the sacrifice.

It is for this reason that the Viśvedevas are asked to lead on the sacrifice to progress (X.66.12; 101.2, prāñcam no yajñam praṇayata sādhuṃyā).

The Viśvedeva hymns fall in three categories according to the need of the time and place where they came to be composed for the worship of some or all the divinities together.

- I Where Viśvedevas only are mentioned without specifically mentioning any particular divinity or divinities.
- II Where some gods only are specifically mentioned.
- III Where all the gods along with even the minor deities as well as the implements of sacrifice would find a mention. I.89, 90; III.20; VII.35 may be considered as characteristic hymns belonging to the third category, where even the pressing stones and the svarus³² are referred to.

Like other gods, they are said to be 'agni-jivhāḥ' (I.89.7, VI.50, 2, etc.) as being eager for the sacrifice (III.20.1, adhvaraṁ vāvaśānāḥ), as knowing the sacrifice (X.66.1, adhvarasya pracetasah), as being the glory of the sacrifice (X.66.8, adhvarāṇām abhiśriyaḥ). Their assumption of names for sacrificial purposes is referred to at X. 63.2. They are said to be praised by 'sāma hymns' (I.107.2, sāmabhiḥ stūya-mānāḥ) and to be arranging the sacrifice (X.66.8, yajña-niṣkṛtaḥ).

Their significant contribution to the growth of the sacrifice and through it to the prosperity of the Aryan society and all that the Aryans considered as good and great, is referred to at X.65.11 (āryā vrataḥ viśrjantaḥ), where the Viśvedevas are said to be spreading the gospel of the Aryan religion.

Thus it will be realised that the ideas about divinity have given positive impetus to the cult of sacrifice and at the same time the sacrifice, as it was evolving, has influenced the ideas about religion in general³³ and the divinity in particular.

32. Svarus: Cf. Chapter IV.

33. For more discussion of the point Cf. Chapter XIII.

Chapter Four

THE SCENE OF THE SACRIFICE

ऋतस्य धामन् रणयन्त देवाः । (IV.7.7)

मा त्वत् क्षेत्राणि अरणानि गन्म (VI. 61.14).

SYNOPSIS:—

Relationship with the hymns and the divinities—absence of big cities as centres of sacrificial activity—performances on the banks of the rivers—the Nadi-sūkta—various rivers associated with sacrificial performances—

The place of performance—generally the household—epithets based on the 'Rta'—ideas underlying the epithets analysed—occasional disturbances—their causes—prayer for accord in assemblies—

Vedi—its importance—association with the Rta—Barhis as seat of the gods—Yūpa—word not always in the sacrificial sense—Sthūrayūpa—Svarus in III.8. planted in a line at the place of sacrifice—idhma and samidh—

Ladles—juhū—upasecanī—darvi—sruc—sruva—ghṛtācī—gharma as the vessel—relative position of the fire and soma-ritual—

—Pressing stones—the upper and lower—the words—'grāvan' and 'adri'—ulūkhalā—vanaspati—the ox-hide and the strainer—various vessels of soma-juice at different stages—amatra—avabhr̥tha—āsvattha—āhāva, etc.—camasa—the relation of the R̥bhus with Tvaṣṭṛ and Aśvins—hotra, potra, etc.—vessels for the worship of different divinities—caru—indications of the scene for a broad idea of sacrifice—the scene of sacrifice as a nucleus for all cultural activity—

The scene of sacrifice occupies a very vital place in its relationship with the growth of the hymns on the one hand and that of the divinities on the other. Both have attained importance and grown in stature due to the central agency of the place of sacrifice, where they could flourish. Thus we find the mention of certain regions where sacrifice has flourished and also get a broad idea about the situation wherein it was performed.

It is noteworthy that there is practically no mention of a particular place as such where the sacrificial sessions were held frequently.¹ Very probably,² big cities as capitals of a number of Chiefs had not attained any definite shape where the growth of cultural life could get momentum, though the existence of some fortified settlements cannot be lost sight of. This would also give an indication that though the sacrifice had grown, it could not be imagined to have attained a stage of regulated, orderly mechanical performance as envisaged by the Brāhmaṇa texts. It would be so, for the very

1. Except perhaps Arjika VIII.7.29 which is described as 'pastyāvat'. It may indicate people as Macdonell imagines (V. I-II p. 62).
2. See Vedic Index II p. 254 etc.

obvious reason that the foothold required for its systematic growth was not available. The impetus that regular construction of a stage must have given to a systematic development of dramatic performances, was given by regular places of sacrificial performances to the orderly and mechanical growth of the sacrifice in the days of the Brāhmaṇas. For want of such a stage, the performances of sacrifices in the days of the R̥gveda could not naturally attain any mechanical character as in the later days.

Thus we find the sacrificial performances being held only on the banks of certain rivers. Even the more important of them which gave rise to the Dānastutis appear to have been held on the banks of the rivers. It is possible to surmise in fact, that the settlements of the Aryans were mostly situated on the banks of the bigger rivers and their tributaries and hence all events of social and political importance have been associated with the names of certain rivers.

The hymn to "The Rivers" is noteworthy in this connection (RV. X.75). It has been written by a poet belonging to the Priyamedha family³ called Sindhuḥṣit perhaps significantly as he was residing on the banks of the river Sindhu. The name also may signify the fact that the persons were known not by the names of any cities or provinces but by the names of the rivers indicating also the fact of the Aryan settlements on the banks of the important rivers. He has naturally mentioned the river Sindhu predominantly (vv.1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9) either independently or along with the other rivers.

In all, twenty-one rivers are mentioned by the poet and as the poet has intended to glorify them as divinities he has referred to them as travelling in the chariot like gods (X.75.9, sukhaṁ rathaṁ yuyuje — v.6, sarathaṁ yābhiriyaṣe) and as being possessed of prosperity (v.8, svaśvā sindhuḥ surathā, suvāsā, hiraṇyayī |). Though we do not find any mention of their association with the sacrifice, some of the rivers have apparently played a significant role in the growth of sacrifice in those days as can be seen below. But even the fact of their glorification in a hymn cannot be entirely devoid of significance. Very possibly the important part played by them in the growth of sacrifice on their banks has prompted the poet to immortalise them in a hymn of this type.

ĀRĠIKĠYĠ⁴

The river is mentioned only once at X.75.5, but the mention of Ārjika at VIII.7.2a where Maruts are said to be going (yayur nicakrayā naraḥ |), at IX.113.2 (Ā pavasva diśāṁ pata ārjikāt soma

3. Vedic Index II. p. 52 and 53 for Priyamedha and Prayamedha.

4. Ārjikiyā—Vedic Index I. p. 62-3.

.....), at IX.65.23 and at VIII.64.11 [Ayaṁ te (Indra!) priyaḥ | ārjikiye madintamaḥ], where soma-juice and Indra-worship are associated with Ārjikas, it would appear that the settlement of the people on the banks of the Ārjikiyā⁵ was taking active part in the development of the soma-sacrifice.

GOMATĪ (3)

Besides its mention in the Nadīsūkta (X.75), Gomatī⁶ as a river which was the scene of some soma-sacrifices, appears to be referred to at two places, at V.61.19⁷ (Eṣa kṣeti rathavītir maghavā gomatī-ranu | parvateṣu apaśritaḥ ||) where Rathavīti, who is described as 'sutasoma' in the previous stanza is stated to be residing and at VIII.24.30⁸ where too in a characteristic Dānastuti, the residing place of the patron is described as Gomatī. From both these references it would seem that the stream of the river Gomatī flowing in the mountains has been a scene of some active soma-worship.

DRṢADVATĪ AND ĀPAYĀ

At III.23.4, the rivers Drṣadvatī⁹ and Āpayā¹⁰ are mentioned as places, where Agni-cult was common (Drṣadvatyām mānuṣa āpayāyām sarasvatyām revad agne didiḥi |). They appear to be rivers flowing in the vicinity of Sarasvatī, and as such forming a region of enthusiastic sacrificial activity, under the patronage of the two Bharata princes Devaśravas and Devavāta,¹¹ who are mentioned in III.23.2, (Amanthiṣṭhā bhāratā revadagniṁ Devaśravā Devavātaḥ sudakṣaṁ |).

PARUṢṆĪ

Paruṣṇī¹² is mentioned in nearly half a dozen passages in the RV., besides its mention in the Nadī-sūkta (X.75.5b). It appears to be a pretty big river (VII.18.8, Aditi—unbound and Mahenadī VIII.74.15a) and particularly as a large number of the enemies of Sudās were drowned therein, as described at VII.18.8-9. At IV.22.2¹³, the metaphor of his wearing the river as a covering or the reference to the friendship with the river, only indicate the close association of Indra i.e., sacrificial sessions on the banks of the river in honour of Indra. In a similar way, Maruts, who are closely associated with Indra are

5. This will be another instance where the name of the people is given by the residence on the banks of the river.
6. Vedic Index I. p. 238.
7. As it is a Dānastuti and there is reference to his dwelling among Parvatas the word Gomatī would preferably be taken in the sense of the streams of the river.
8. See Nārya in Chapter VIII.
9. Vedic Index I. p. 374.
10. Vedic Index I. p. 58.
11. See Chapter VIII.
12. Paruṣṇī—Vedic Index I. p. 499-500.
13. (śriye paruṣṇimuṣamāṇa ūṛṇaṁ, yasyāḥ parvāṇi sakhyāya vivye).

also associated with the river Paruṣṇī at V.52.9 (Uta sma te paruṣṇyā-mūrṇā vasata śundhyuvaḥ |) and their association with sacrifice is referred to in the following verse V.52.10 (Etebhirmahyaṁ nāmabhiḥ yajñaṁ viṣṭāra oḥate |), where they are said to be supporting the sacrifice of the mortals. The river is more significantly mentioned in a Dānastuti at VIII.74.15,

Satyamit tvā mahenadi paruṣṇyava dediśam |
Nemāpo aśvadātaraḥ śaviṣṭhādesti martyaḥ ||

where the gifts of Śrutarvan Ārkṣa and saviṣṭha are praised¹⁴. They are said to be keen worshippers of Agni and of whom Śrutarvan possibly belongs to the family of Anu,¹⁵ whose fire is referred to in this hymn (VII.74.4, Āganma vṛtrahantamaṁ jyeṣṭhaṁ agni-mānavam).

YAMUNĀ :

Yamunā¹⁶ is referred to in three places. At X.75.5, the river is mentioned along with Gaṅgā, Sarasvatī, etc. At V.52.17, Yamunā is associated with Maruts even as Paruṣṇī at V.52.9 and as the gift is being referred to here, (9b, Ekamekā śatā daduḥ | Yamunāyām adhi śrutam ud rādho gavyam mṛje, ni rādho aśvyam mṛje |), sacrificial performances on its banks can easily be inferred. This is made clearer at VII.18.19, where Yamunā along with Trītsus is said to have protected Indra (Āvadindram Yamunā Trītsavaśca |) apparently by the performances of soma-sacrifices in his honour.

VIPĀṬ :

The close connection of Vipāṭ¹⁷ with Indra is indicated at two places (III.33.1¹⁸ and IV.30.11¹⁹) which may imply some sacrificial activity on the banks of the river. It is not mentioned in the Nadī-sūkta.

ŚUTUDRĪ :

Śutudrī²⁰ is mentioned along with Vipāṭ at III.33.1 and at X.75.5. Perhaps there was not much habitation in the mountainous part of its flow and hence no specific mention of sacrificial activity occurs, though at its confluence with Vipāṭ, it comes to occupy some importance on account of some activity of political as well as sacrificial nature, as indicated in III.33.

14. Cf. Chapter VIII.

15. Cf. Chapter VIII.

16. Yamunā—Vedic Index II p. 301.

17. Vipāṭ—Vedic Index II, p. 301.

18. Where she is said to be flowing under orders of Indra.

19. Where the car of Uśas is said to be broken on the river Vipāś by Indra.

20. Śutudrī V.I, II, p. 385.

SARASVATĪ :

The river Sarasvatī,²¹ out of all the rivers mentioned in the Nadi-sūkta (X.75), has been glorified in three independent hymns (VI.61; VII.95 and 96). Out of all the places in the RV., where she is referred to,²² her association with other gods and goddesses is indicated in nearly two-thirds of the passages. This would indirectly suggest that most of the major divinities as well as the minor ones like Rākā, Sinivālī, etc., have grown on the banks of the river, which could thus appear to have been an active witness of the evolution and growth of the divinities through the medium of the sacrifice. It is therefore natural that she should be styled as Naditamā, Ambitamā and Devitamā at II.41.16. Whoever came to be styled as Pañcajanas and who have played an active part in the growth of the sacrifice,²³ are said to have been helped to grow by Sarasvatī (VI.61.12, pañcha jātā vardhayantī |), also indicating the sacrificial activity going on steadily on its banks. Thus Sarasvatī is requested to listen to the call in the sacrifice (VII.95.4, upaśravat subhagā yajñe'smin |) or is said to be worshipped in sacrifice (X.17.7-9, yajñamabhi nakṣamānā havante; asmin barhiṣi mādayasva — adhware tāyamāne havante etc.). The soma-sacrifice is associated with the river Sarasvatī when it is said that Indra is refreshed by her when he drinks the soma-juice (X.131.5, yat surāmaṁ vyapibaḥ śacibhiḥ Sarasvatī tvā Maghavannabhiṣṇak |). At VII.96.2, where she is asked to inspire gifts of patrons (coda rādho maghonām) in a very general way, it is obvious that a number of sacrifices were usually performed on the banks of the river. Like Gomatī, the river Sarasvatī is referred to in the Dānastuti of Citra,²⁴ (VIII.21.17-18). The gift of the patron is praised in a very characteristic way by saying that the gift can be given only by Indra, Sarasvatī or Citra (V.17, Indro vā ghedīyan maghaṁ Sarasvatī vā subhagā dadirvasu | tvaṁ vā Citra dāśuṣe). This would indicate that though a number of soma-sacrifices were going on on the banks of the river Sarasvatī, where Indra must be giving gifts liberally, the gift of Citra was particularly considered as liberal. Citra alone, therefore, in comparison with all others residing on the banks, is said to be the king, others being merely kinglings, (V.18, Citra id rājā rājakā id anyake | yake Sarasvatīm-anu |), further indicating how a number of small kings too residing on the banks of the river Sarasvatī were performing sacrifices.

Thus because the sacrificial activity was so common on the banks of the river Sarasvatī, the poet is praying to Sarasvatī that

21. V.I. II. pp. 434-37.

22. I. 89.3; I. 164.49; II. 30.8, 32.8, 41.16; III. 54.13; V. 42.12, 43.11, 46.2; VI. 49.7, 50.12, 52.6, 61.2, 61.12, 14; VII. 9.5, 36.6, 39.5, 40.3, 95.4, 96.2; VIII. 21.17, 18; 54.4; X. 17.7, 30.12, 131.5, 184.2.

23. See Chapter VIII.

24. See Chapter VIII for Citra.

they should not be required to go to other regions (VI.61.14, *Mā tvat kṣetrāṇi araṇāni ganma |*).

SINDHU :

The word Sindhu²⁵ is used in the sense of a stream in general at a number of places. In the special sense of a river it is used at about a dozen places,²⁶ out of which at one place only a patron called Svanaya Bhāvya²⁷ is said to be performing soma-sacrifice on the banks of this river (*amandān tsoṃān prabhare maṇiṣā sindhāvadhi kṣiyato bhāvyaṣya | yo me sahasramamimīta savānatūrto rājā śrava icchamānaḥ ||*). This may indicate that it was not as important a scene of sacrificial activity as Sarasvatī was. It was a poet residing on the banks of this big river who wrote the Nadi-sūkta (X.75) as his name Sindhu-kṣit would indicate. He has glorified the greatness of the river when he says that all the rivers join the Sindhu (X.75.4, *Abhi tvā Sindho śiśumin na mātaro vāsrā arṣanti payaseva dhenavaḥ | yadāsāmagraṃ pravatāminakṣasi*), which alone has apparently inspired the poet to place the river at the top of all the rivers.

SUVĀSTU :

The river Suvāstu²⁸ is mentioned in the Dānastuti of Śyāva at VIII.19.37²⁹ indicating the place of sacrifice where the gift was given to the poet.

About twenty other rivers have also been mentioned in the R̥gveda³⁰ but their sacrificial association is not referred to, possibly suggesting that their banks had not attained the place of importance as strongholds of the Aryan civilization symbolised by the sacrifice.

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE :

The place where the sacrifice was actually performed, has been variously referred to, indicative of the ideas with which sacrifice was looked at by the poets, apparently interested in its growth. Even though the measurement of the altar and the situation of three fires, etc., are referred to, we do not come across any clear reference to sacrificial halls specially erected for that purpose for permanent use. The reference in general to the place of performance and also the mention of the banks of a number of rivers, appear to indicate that bigger sacrificial sessions were held on the open spaces near

25. Vedic Index II. p. 450.

26. I. 122.6, 126.1; IV. 54.6, 55.3; V. 53.9; VII. 95.1; VIII. 12.3, 25.14, 20.25, 26.18; X. 64.9.

27. Svanaya Bhāvya residing on Sindhu (I. 126.1). cf. Chapter VIII.

28. Vedic Index II. p. 460.

29. Chapter VIII.

30. Asiknī, Ūrnāvatī, Kubhā, Krumu, Gaṅgā, Tr̥ṣṭāmā, Marudvrdhā, Mehatnu, Rasā, Vitastā, Vibālī, Śīphā, Śvetyā, Sadānirā, Sarayū, Śilamāvatī, Suṣomā, Śusarju, Hariyūpiyā.

the banks of the rivers, may be with temporary shelters erected for the purpose³¹ while a number of ordinary sacrifices were performed in the house, where temporary arrangements appear to be made for the purpose.

Thus in a very general way, we find reference to "The house of the liberal patron" *dāśuṣo gṛhaṁ* VII.74.4; VIII.13.10; VIII.22.3, etc. or *dāśuṣo duroṇaṁ* III.25.4. At times, it is referred to merely as a house (I.74.4, *kṣaye veṣi havyāni* | VII.24.1, *yonīṣṭa Indra sadane akāri* | also VII.70.2, VIII.76.2, etc.) With the skill of the sacrificer in view, it was called '*sukṛtaḥ duroṇaṁ*' (IV.13.1, I.117.2, I.183.1). With the purity of the place of worship in view, it was called 'a pure place' (VII.41.6, *śucaye padāya*). With the soma-pressing of the sacrificer in view, it was called '*sutāvato niṣkṛtaṁ*' (III.58.9). Because the people used to pay their homage to the divinities at the place, it came to be designated '*namasaspada*' at VIII.23.9 [*upo enaṁ (Agniṁ) jujuṣur namasaspade*]. As gods would be delighted at the place by receiving the offerings, the place was called '*devānāṁ upamādaṁ*' (III.5.5d). "The place of the fathers" at VIII.9.21 (*Pituryonā niṣīdathaḥ*) may refer to the place of sacrifice as well as the altar where also the gods are said to be sitting (cf. '*Hotṛ-sadana*' below). The word *Vidatha*³² is also used in the sense of the place of sacrifice at times IV.36.5 (*vidatheṣu pravācyāḥ*), VII.84.3 (*kṛtaṁ no yajñāṁ vidatheṣu cāruṁ* |), VIII.11.2 (*Tvamasi praśasyo vidatheṣu*).

By far the largest number of epithets employed to signify the place of sacrifice are based on *Ṛta*. Thus '*Ṛtasya Dhāman*' indicates the place of sacrifice at I.43.9 and at VII.36.5 (*yajante asya sakhyāṁ vayasā namasvinaḥ śva ṛtasya dhāman* |). It is referred to as '*ṛtasya sadana*' or '*ṛtasya sādana*' at I.84.4 (*śukrasya tvā abhyakṣaran dhārā ṛtasya sādane* |) and VIII.9.10; II.34.13b (*Rudrā ṛtasya sadaneṣu vāvṛdhuḥ* |); as '*ṛtasya sadma*' at III.55.14 (*ṛtasya sadma vicarāmi vidvān* |), as '*ṛtasya pada*'³³ at IV.5.9 (*ṛtasya pade dīdyānamagniṁ*); as '*ṛtasya panthāḥ*' at VI.44.8 (*ṛtasya pathi vedhā apāyi*), when Indra is said to drink soma in the place of sacrifice; as '*ṛtasya duroṇa*' at VII.60.5 (*ime ṛtasya vāvṛdhuḥ duroṇe . . . aditeḥ putrāḥ*), where gods are said to be increasing in the place of sacrifice.

At about half a dozen places,³⁴ the word '*vivasvataḥ sadana*' is used and it appears that, though it may refer sometimes to the altar (III.51.3 and X.12.7), it indicates the place of sacrifice in

31. See below (V. 62.6).

32. Max Müller S.B.E. Vol. 46 p. 26; Geldner V.S. I. 147; Bloomefield J.A.O.S. 19.12; Vedic Index II. pp. 296-7.

33. See below under 'altar', where it is also construed as 'Vedi'. Some words are vague and may mean either.

34. I. 53.1; III. 34.7, 51.3; X. 12.7; 75.1.

general. Thus at I.53.1 (bharāmahe girah Indraya vivasvataḥ sadane |), Indra is said to be offered hymns in the place of sacrifice; also III.34.7 (vivasvataḥ sadane asya tāni viprā ukthebhiḥ kavayo gr̥ṇanti |) or at X.75.1, the singer is said to be praising the greatness of the rivers in the place of sacrifice (pra su va āpo mahimānamuttamaṁ kārurvocāmi sadane vivasvataḥ |). With the presence of Agni, the gods are said to be placing themselves in the 'house of vivasvat' (X.12.7, yasmin devā vidathe mādayante, vivasvataḥ sadane dhārayante |) where the term may indicate the place in general or the altar in particular as also at III.51.3, where Indra is said to be finding delight (vivasvataḥ sadane ā hi pipriye |).

It is interesting to analyse the idea which prompted the poets to employ these epithets. When ordinary words like kṣaya, gaya, duroṇa are employed, it was obviously done because of the usual sacrifice, that they were used to perform in the house, without any specific place earmarked for the purpose like Agni-śaraṇa of the later days. Agni-dhāna is referred to in a late hymn of the R̥gveda (X.165.3, Nāṣṭryāṁ padaṁ kṛṇute agni-dhāne |); but very possibly the word merely refers to the actual place of kindling fire and not the sacrificial chamber in general.

The epithet 'vivasvataḥ sadana', emphasizes the importance of Agni in the sacrifice. It signifies the fact that the place of sacrifice could be considered as the place of Agni, as Agni had the lion's share in the sacrificial performance. The epithets based on R̥ta are more significant. It is well-known that the R̥gveda conceives R̥ta as a principle which lies at the root of human as well as divine activity and as such becomes the basis of ideas, religious, ethical and philosophical. When the place of sacrifice in general or the altar in particular is designated on the basis of the R̥ta emphasizing it as the seat of R̥ta, it should become clear as to what type of importance the thinkers were attaching to the sacrifice in the life of the Aryans at the time. In general, the progress of the society in all walks of life had come to be measured in terms of sacrifice as it was almost the sole means of social emancipation in all these fields.

Difference in humble and rich places of sacrifice, very possibly according to the amount of soma-juice pressed and offered has been referred to at I.101.8 (yad vā marutvaḥ parame sadhasthe yad vā'vame vṛjane mādayāse |). This may refer to the contrast between the sacrificial offerings of individuals and those of rich patrons or groups, or it may be the one between the offerings of minor patrons (who appear to be coming together in certain sacrificial sessions) and those of the more illustrious ones.

The cultural level of the people assembling for sacrificial performances is hinted at VII.1.4 (yatrā narāḥ samāsate sujātāḥ) and

at VII.1.15 (sujātāsaḥ paricaranti vīrāḥ), where such nobly born persons are said to be participating in the sacrificial performances.

Some of the sacrificial sessions appear to be attended by a large number of people as suggested at I.65.2 (Ṛtasya devā anu vratā guḥ bhuvat pariṣṭirdyaurna bhūma |) where a sacrificial gathering vast like the heaven, is referred to. Ample space was apparently required for some sacrifices at least, which is said to be provided by the divinities at I.96.6 (Agni-ṣomā brahmaṇā vāvṛdhānā ūruṁ yajñāya cakrathuḥ u lokam |). At V.62.6, apparently such a specially erected spacious structure is referred to —

Akravihastā sukr̥te paraspā yaṁ trāsāthe varuṇe tās vantaḥ |
Rājānā kṣatramahṛṇīyamānā sahasrasthūṇaṁ bibhṛthaḥ saha
dvau ||

Here Mitra and Varuṇa are said to be supporting a structure of a thousand pillars for protecting a person while offering oblations (Iḷāsu). It was apparently erected for the purposes of a sacrificial performance. It is interesting to note that the divinities are referred to as Akravihastā³⁵ on this occasion, which apparently means "whose hands are free from flesh or blood". This may indicate that (1) animal sacrifices were not offered to Mitra and Varuṇa or (2) they were not required to kill any obstructors and as such their hands were free from blood. This would be so because of the powerful influence of Mitra and Varuṇa which would keep away the disturbing element.³⁶ The place of sacrifice had thus come to be considered as free from violation due to the influence of the divinities.

A kind of jubilation, characterizing the sacrificial gatherings with people rising up and joining in, is referred to at IX.88.2 (Ādīm viśvā nahuṣyāṇi jātā svarṣātā vana ūrdhvā navanta |). The bright appearance of the sacrificial gathering, possibly due to the presence of a number of rich patrons is referred to at X.31.5.

(Iyaṁ sā bhūyā uṣasām iva kṣā yaddha kṣumantaḥ śavasā
samāyan |

Asya stutiṁ jaritur bhikṣamāṇā ā naḥ śagmāsa upayantu vājāḥ ||)

where the sacrificial assembly is said to be like the residing place of the Dawns with the coming together of the patrons. They are said to be on the look-out for the hymn of the poet (asya stutiṁ jaritur bhikṣamāṇāḥ), though they themselves have brought gifts of food (kṣumantaḥ). This would indicate that the hymns were con-

35. The word 'Kravis' is used at I.162.9 & 10 (Āśvasya kraviṣaḥ and Āmasya kraviṣo gandhaḥ) in the sense of 'flesh'.

36. Even as in Ś. III.1.

Kā kathā bāṇa-sandhāne . . .
Huṅkāreṇaiva dhanuṣaḥ sa hi vighanān apohati |

sidered more important than the rich offerings that could be given by patrons.

As a variety of people would be participating in some big sacrificial assemblies, complete accord of all of them was essential for a smooth performance. We have not got any positive proof of the disturbances in the sacrificial assemblies, but it can be imagined that they could take place. It is a well-known fact that different sections among people must have fostered the worship of different divinities, though they may not have been exactly antagonistic towards each other. The reference to a section of people who could doubt the existence of Indra or his influence³⁷ or the necessity felt by a poet to emphasize to the people in general, the nature of Indra (sa janāsa Indraḥ II.12) appear to indicate that certain sections had come to entertain some staunch feelings either for or against some divinities. When this would happen, counteraction was inevitable and that would lead to some disturbances in the sacrificial assemblies while the performance would be in progress.

At X.141.4

(Indra-vāyū Bṛhaspatiṁ suhaveha havāmahe |
Yathā naḥ sarva ijjanaḥ saṅgatyāṁ sumanā asat ||),

Vāyu and Bṛhaspati are said to be invoked in the sacrificial assembly (saṅgatyāṁ) so that all people could be well-disposed towards the performance. This would suggest that, for securing the accord, certain joint sacrifices in honour of different deities, who could form a group as Indra, Vāyu and Bṛhaspati do, used to be performed. This appears to be an attempt in a smaller sphere, where deities having some affinity with each other, are concerned. But when deities like Indra and Varuṇa come to be joined together, there would appear to be some definite idea behind it and it would be of such an accord among people of different sets of thought and affinities, that the poet is talking of. In fact, it seems that the introduction of the group of Viśvedevas was a bold step in the direction of achieving social amity, which became increasingly necessary with the growth of deities and sacrifice, which must have brought in some jealousies.³⁸

This clash due to differences of opinion regarding the importance of deities, or the type of offering to be given to the divinities, or the hymns to be recited at a particular sacrifice, seems to have prompted the author of X.191 to give a directive to the people who have gathered at a place of sacrifice (as indicated by the kindling of fire — iḷaspade samidhyase | at X. 191.1), to move and talk with one accord and appreciate each other's mind or views (v.2, saṅga-cchadhvaṁ saṁ vadadhvaṁ sam vo manāṁsi jānatām |) and as if to

37. Chapter IX.

38. Cf. 'Viśvedevas' in Chapter III.

alleviate all suspicions in their mind, add that gods are of perfect accord in accepting the gifts (v.2, *devā bhāgaṃ yathā pūrve sañjānānā upāsate* |). It appears that with the discord caused previously in view, the poet adds that similar hymns would be recited in their honour (*samānaṃ mantramabhi mantraye vaḥ*), similar offerings would be offered to them (*samānena vo haviṣā juhomi*), and that there would be perfect accord in the assembly (*samitiḥ samānī*).

ALTAR :³⁹

At the place of sacrifice, the most conspicuous part would be the altar. This is also suggested by its being referred to as the centre of sacrifice (VIII.12.32, *yad asya dhāmani priye samīcināso asvaran | nābhā yajñasya dohanā ||*; also VIII. 13.29, *nābhā yajñasya samdadhuḥ*), where ample soma-juices are referred to as being poured on it. The same fact is also referred to at X.61.2, where Tūrvayāṇa's offer of ample soma-juice has been mentioned. (*Tūrvayāṇaḥ kṣodo no reta itaūti siñcat |*). In this very passage Cyavāna is said to have measured the 'vedi' and made all elaborate preparations, but with no sincerity at heart (*sa id dānāya dabhyāya vanvañcyavānaḥ sūdairamimīta vedim |*). Thus it is suggested here that all the preparations with technical perfection would be of no avail against good songs and soma-juice. In fact, it appears that the technical and mechanical aspect of the sacrifice is not attached so much importance in comparison with the sentimental and what may be termed quantitative aspect of it. Thus even the comparatively later Ṛgvedic sacrifice appears to have come to the stage of having its efficacy judged on quantitative grounds rather than mechanical ones. At X.114.3, the quadrangular altar is referred to (*catuṣkapardā yuvatīḥ supeśā ghṛtapratikā vayunāni vaste yatra devā dadhire bhāga-dheyam |*). 'Vayunāni vaste' suggests that the mode of shaping or decorating, etc., of the vedi was supposed to be changing from time to time or may be from region to region.

As the altar occupied a very important place in the sacrificial performance and as the sacrificial performance had a significant bearing on the idea of Ṛta, the vedi has come to be designated as the centre of Ṛta (IX.74.4, X.13.3, *Ṛtasya nābhiḥ*) or the place of Ṛta (IV.5.9, *Ṛtasya pade*) or as the source of Ṛta (*Ṛtasya yoniḥ*, I.65.4, III.62.18,etc., X.8.3). Possibly with the importance of sacrifice on Earth in view, it is called the centre of Earth (*Pṛthivyāḥ nābhā*, X.1.6, IX.82.3, etc.) With its raised position in view, as also its association with gods residing high up in heaven, it is called the 'summit of heaven' (*Pṛthivyāḥ sānu*', IX.63.27 or *Pṛthivyāḥ varṣman* III.5.8, 9). With the offerings put in the fire on the altar in view, it is called 'īlaḥ pada' (VI.1.2, *Adhā hotā nyaśido yajiyān īlaḥ pade |*

39. VMH I. p. 179.

and I.128.1; III.10.1, 23.4, etc.). With the oblations in view, it is called 'ghṛtavān yoniḥ' (III.5.7, Ā yonimagnir ghṛtavantamasthāt).

The above epithets appear to have become so common in course of time that the altar could be referred to merely as Nābhi. (IV.10.8) or Yoni (III.9.3, IV.3.2, X.110.6, etc.). The word 'Dhiṣaṇā' possibly refers to the altar as suggested by Hillebrandt⁴⁰ at I.109.3,4; III.2.1, 49.4; IV.34.1; V.41.8; VI.11.3; X.17.12, particularly as the stones are said to be situated in its lap (I.109.3, Tā hyadri dhiṣaṇāyā upasthe |) whereas V.31.12 says that the lower pressing stone rests on the altar (see below). At one place in the R̥gveda the word 'dhiṣṇyā' appears to refer to the place, where fire is kindled (IV.3.6, kad dhiṣṇyāsu vṛdhasāno agne . . .). The plural indicates the three fires referred to sometimes (II.3.7 'adhi sānuṣu triṣu . . . devān yajantaḥ samānjataḥ' |; II.36.4, 'uśan hotar niṣadā yoniṣu triṣu |). The same appears to be indicated by the epithet 'triṣadhastha' (situated in three places), applied to 'Agni' at V.4.8; (sahasah sūno triṣadhastha), cf. also VI.8.7, 12.2. These three places in which Agni came to be worshipped may be indicative of the three aspects of Agni but they appear to be taken as a unit with perhaps the unity of fire in view (V.11.2, Agniṁ naraḥ triṣadhasathe samidhire |), where fire is said to be kindled in the 'triṣadhastha'. With these three altars in view, the sacred grass which is spread on them is also referred to as 'triṣadhastha' at I.74.4 (Triṣadhasathe barhiṣi yajñam mimikṣataṁ |) and with the fact of the gods coming to the altar to receive the offerings in mind, a number of other deities are also referred to as 'triṣadhastha'.⁴¹ At times it would appear that different altars were erected for different divinities and thus at X.8.4, seven places are referred to (ṛtāya sapta dadhiṣe padāni |).

As the seat of Agni, it is referred to as 'Hotṛsadana' II.9.1 (ni hotā hotṛsadane . . . asadat) and Agni is called 'vedīśad hota' at IV.4.50 or merely as 'vedīśad' at I.140.1 (vedīśade agnaye |). Agni-sacrifice winning wealth is said to be possible by keeping ready the altar, the oblations and the soma-juice. (VIII.19.18). Sacred grass is said to be spread on the altar (II.34, barhiḥ stīrṇam vedyasyām |), fuel and oblations offered thereon (VI.1.10, vidhema . . . samidhota havyaiḥ vedī . . . |). The purity of the place was sought to be maintained scrupulously as suggested at VII.60.9, where the revilers are expected to be kept away for the purpose. (ava vedīm hotrābhir yajeta ripaḥ kāściḍ varuṇadhrutaḥ saḥ |). Because of the importance of the vedi in the sacrifice, vedi has been deified in a Viśve-devā hymn, in the same manner as the 'Barhis' (VII.35.7, śamu astu vediḥ). Though the measuring of the vedi is referred to (X.61.2), no particular measurements appear to be enforced. It however seems to be a fairly big and strong

40. V.I. pp.399-400 for different views.

41. Sarasvatī VI. 61.2. Soma VIII. 83.5. Brhaspati IV. 50.1. Viṣṇu I. 156.5

enclosure as indicated by V.31.12 (vadan grāvā ava vedim bhriyāte), where the upper pressing stone is said to be brought down (on the lower stone which apparently was placed) on the altar. With the vital role of the Altar in the sacrifice as the place where gods come and receive their oblations, the Altar is called the farthest extremity of the Earth (I.164.35a iyaṁ vediḥ paro antaḥ pṛthivyāḥ |), because that spot marks the beginning of the region of the gods.

BARHIḤ :

Next in importance to the vedi at the place of sacrifice would of course be the sacred grass (Barhiḥ), which was meant as a seat for the gods. All the gods are said to be occupying the seat on the Barhis grass, when they approach the sacrifice for receiving oblations. As in the case of sacrifice to Viśve-devāḥ where all the gods are expected to come and attend the sacrificial performance, the seat of Barhis grass should be very extensive as indicated at I.85.6c (sīdatā barhir uru vaḥ sadaskṛtaṁ |). It also appears to be spread on the path by which the gods were expected to come and as such is referred to as "easy to move along" (pra vāvṛje suprayā barhiresāṁ, VII.39.2a). As a seat for the divinities it has got to be very cosy and so it is referred to as ūṇamrad (V.5.4, ūṇamradā vi prathasva |)⁴² and as the gods frequently attend the sacrificial performances, the place is dear to them (I.85.7, sīdan adhi barhiṣi priye; VIII.13.24, ni barhiṣi priye and IX.55.2). The grass is also said to be spreading for the sake of the gods (devavyacāḥ, III.4.4) and as fit for the complete sacrificial performance (stṛṇīta barhiḥ adhvarāya sādhu, VII.43.2). For this purpose it is said to be spread on the altar (II.3.4, stīṇam subharam vedi asyām |) and the vedi is called ūṇāvat, characterised by wool—at VI.53.16 (ūṇāvantam prathamam sīda yonim |) and with the path referred to above in view, it is said to be spread facing the east as that would be the direction from which the gods would be expected to come (I.188.4, prāchinam barhir ojasāastrān |). The gods are therefore requested to come, to sit upon it and enjoy the oblations (III.41.3, ā barhiḥ sīda vihi puroḷāsaṁ |). Indra is said to be sitting upon it like a king (X.43.2, Rājeva dasma niṣado'dhi barhiṣi |) and from such a seat of other patrons and poets he is once referred to as coming to Vasiṣṭhas being attracted by their soma-offerings (VII.33.1, Uttiṣṭhan voce pari barhiṣo nṛn, na me dūrāda-vitave Vasiṣṭhāḥ |). As this grass was exclusively meant for the use of the divinities,⁴³ we do not come across any references to its being spread as seat of the human beings even in the sacrifice. Those things however which were meant for the gods were honoured by

42. For the description of Barhis in Āpri hymns—see my paper. AHR. B.U.J. 1945-6.

43. Barhiṣad (II.3.3 etc.) and Barhiṣṭha (III.13.1) are exclusively used as epithets of gods and at all passages gods only are said to be sitting (niṣad, āsad, āsa etc.).

being placed on the 'barhis' grass. Thus the oblations to be offered are said to be placed on the 'barhis' grass (I.117.1, *barhiṣmatī rātiḥ*). It is said to be sprinkled over with ghee before the gods sit upon it (*ghṛtenāktam vasavaḥ sīdatedam*, II.3.4). The epithet 'ghṛtapṛsthā' which is otherwise applied to Agni is used about 'barhis' at I.13.5 (*stṛṇīta barhirānuṣak ghṛtapṛsthām*).

Soma-juice is said to be placed on 'barhis' (I.52.3, IX.68.1, *indavaḥ barhiṣadaḥ*, and IX.87.4). Even the soma-plant is said to be placed on the 'barhis' grass at IX.87.1, *aśvam na tvā vājinaṁ marjayanto'cchā barhiḥ raśanābhir nayanti |*). In the 'Diviṣṭi' sacrifice,⁴⁴ the soma is said to be pressed on the 'barhis' grass (I.86.4, *asya vīrasya barhiṣi sutaḥ somaḥ diviṣṭiṣu |*). As the pressing was taking place on a layer of 'barhis' grass, soma is said to be thundering on it (*vṛṣā stanayannadhi barhiṣi*, IX.19.3). The beast of the sacrifice was also made to stand on the 'barhis' grass at the time of sprinkling water (X.90.7, *barhiṣi praukṣan puruṣam*).

As the priests would be going to the sacrifice with 'barhis' grass they were called 'barhiṣmataḥ' (I.51.8; I.53.6, etc.). As they would be cutting the grass for the purposes of the sacrifice, they came to be called 'vṛktabarhiṣaḥ' (I.14.5, *kaṇvāsaḥ priyamedhāsaḥ* at VIII.69.18, etc.). As spreading the 'barhis' grass would be come across in the sacrifices, they came to be called 'stīrṇabarhiṣaḥ' (X.21.1, *stīrṇabarhiṣe yajñāya*) and the person who spreads it is also so called (V.37.2, *samiddhāgniḥ stīrṇabarhiḥ yuktagrāvā śutasomo jarāte |*).

Its importance at the place of sacrifice is best illustrated by its being identified with sacrifice at VII.75.8 (*mā no barhiḥ puruṣatā nide kaḥ |*), where the Dawn is requested to maintain the reputation of the singer's sacrifice among the people.

By the side of the vedi, and the grass scattered over, on some occasions would be found the 'Yūpa'.

YŪPA :⁴⁵

The word 'yūpa' is referred to in the R̥gveda only thrice.⁴⁶ Out of these passages, only at V.2.7 (*śunaściccheṇam niditam sahasrād yūpād amuñco aśamiṣṭa hi saḥ*), the sacrificial post is meant. At the two other places the word merely refers to ordinary posts. Thus I.51.14 (*Indro aśrāyi sudhyo nireke pajreṣu stomo duryo na yūpaḥ |*) refers to Indra who is said to be firm like a post to which the panel of the door is attached and IV.33.3 (*punar ye cakruḥ pitarā yuvānā*

44. Cf. Chapter VI for 'Diviṣṭi'.

45. Vedic Index Vol. II. p. 194.

46. I. 51.14; IV. 33.3; V. 2.7.

sanā yūpeva jaraṇā śayānā)⁴⁷ appears to refer to merely some logs of wood lying down on the earth. The Aśva hymn (I.162) seems to refer to Yūpa in its sacrificial sense (I.162.6) (Yūpavraskā uta ye yūpavāhāścaśālāṃ ye aśvayūpāya takṣati |). Here the help of those people who help in the preparation of the Horse-sacrifice, is being referred to and hence the Yūpa is called specifically 'aśvayūpa' and the people are described as Yūpa-vraska (who carve the post) and who carry the post (to the place of sacrifice, Yūpavāhāḥ |). A poet called 'Sthūrayūpa' is referred to at VIII.23.24 (Nūnamarca vihayase stomebhiḥ sthūrayūpavat), where the poet Vaiyaśva is asked to sing like Sthūrayūpa to Agni. The name may be significant as referring to a poet who has perhaps employed a conspicuously big post in his sacrificial performance and attained fame thereby. Even in the Śunḥśepa hymns (I.24-30), though Śunḥśepa's being tied up to a sacrificial post is referred to, the word Yūpa is not used. cf. (I.24.13, Śunḥśepo hyavhad grbhītastrīṣu ādityaṃ drupadeṣu baddhaḥ).

It will thus be noticed that the word Yūpa though it has got currency in the sacrificial sense sometime, it has not been confined to that sense in the Ṛgveda. This conjecture finds confirmation in the fact that in the hymn written in glorification of the sacrificial post (III.8),⁴⁸ the post is not referred to as Yūpa but merely by the general term vanaspati (III.8.1, 3). In verses 6 to 10, many posts are referred to as 'svaru'. It will be perhaps nearer the truth to say that the word 'svaru'⁴⁹ was more popularly known than 'yūpa'⁵⁰ in the sense of the sacrificial post, to which the beast is tied (see III.8.9 below). In respect of brightness, Uṣas is compared with 'svaru' at I.92.5 (svaruṃ na peśo vidatheṣu añjañ citraṃ divo duhitā bhānum-aśret.⁵¹ The tying of the beast to the post and its anointing are referred to at IV.6.3 (udu svarurnavajā nākraḥ paśvo anakti sudhitaḥ sumekaḥ |). Other sacrificial associations are referred to along with 'svaru' at VIII.45.2 (brhannid idhma eṣāṃ bhūriśastaṃ prthuh svaruḥ yeṣāṃ indro yuvā sakhā), where Indra is said to be glorifying the sacrificial performances of those who are favoured by him by getting their fuel praised and their sacrificial post (considered as) big. Just as 'idhma' is small sticks considered big being taken collectively, 'svaru' also may refer to the small posts referred to collectively here.

In respect of firmness the dawns are compared with sacrificial posts at IV.51.2 (asthuru citrā uṣasaḥ purastān mitā iva svaravo adhvaṛeṣu |). In all the three passages of its reference in the famous Yūpa hymn III.8. (viz., III.8.6, 9 and 10), the word is used in the

47. Cf. my paper on Ṛbhus—B.U.J. 1952.

48. Cf. Chapter XI.

49. V.I. p. 494. In the Brāhmaṇa literature the word appears to be fixed in the sense of "splinters" as pointed by Macdonell (p. 494 F.N. 3).

50. I. 92.5; III. 6, 9, 10; IV. 6.3, 51.2; VIII. 35.7; VIII. 45.2.

51. See Chapter XII.

plural as distinguished from 'vanaspati', that is addressed (III.8.6, *Yān vā naro devayanto nimimyrvanaspate svadhitiṛ vā tatakṣa | te devāsaḥ svaravastasthivāmsaḥ |*). They appear to be painted white and as such are compared with swans at III.8.9 (*Hamsā iva śreṇiśo yatānāḥ śukrā vasānāḥ svaravo nā āguḥ*) and become standard of comparison for Uṣas at I.92.5 (see above). With knobs or rings on their tops, they are compared with animals possessed of horns (III.8.10, *śṛṅgāṇīvecchṛṅgiṇāṁ saṁ dadṛśre caśālavantaḥ svaravaḥ pṛthivyāṁ |*). Thus it can be seen that they are chopped off with an axe and made to have a particular size and shape, possibly a uniform one as suggested by comparison with the swans and the dawns. They are to be planted deep at the place of sacrifice by the sacrificing people (III.8.6a, *naro devayanto nimimyuḥ*), are quite firm (*tasthivāmsaḥ*) and painted white. They are referred to as divine at III.8.6 (*te devāsaḥ* and III.8.9d, *devā devānāṁ* etc.) and at VII.35.7, where they are sought to be propitiated along with the other gods and some other accessories of sacrifice which are thought of as divinities for the purpose. (*śaṁ naḥ svarūṇāṁ mitayo bhavantu |*). Their comparison with the swans going in lines (III.8.9a, *Hamsā iva śreṇiśo yatānāḥ*) and dawns appearing in front (IV.51.2, see above) would give the impression that they were planted in the place of sacrifice at regular intervals. At III.8, they are distinguished from Vanaspati which is said to be 'śatavalśa' (having hundred branches) at III.8.11. It may possibly mean that the 'vanaspati' is a big tree,⁵² that used to be brought at the place of sacrifice and then with the help of the axe the various branches of a certain size were cut off for the purposes of the sacrifice and they are referred to as the 'svarus'. It is not clear, however, as to what purpose was served by those pillars in the sacrifice. If we are to believe that so many beasts would be tied to them, we shall have to imagine that so many beasts used to be sacrificed then at a time. This inference, however, is not justified as it is not substantiated by evidence at any other place.⁵³ On the contrary, when a reference to the tying of the beast occurs the post and the beast are both referred to in the singular (cf. I.92.5; IV.6.3 and VIII.45.2). At V.44.5 (*saṁjarbhurāṇastarubhiḥ sutegr̥bhaṁ vayākināṁ cittagarbhāsu susvaruḥ*), Agni is qualified as 'susvaruḥ' which perhaps may indicate that those svarus were arranged round about the place, where the fire was kindled at the place of the sacrifice. Sāyaṇa takes the word to mean 'śobhanagamanah' and is followed by others (moving beautifully—Griffith). From the description of the 'svarus' given above, however, it will be more appropriate to take the word as connected with the 'svarus', that were to be found in the place of sacrifice arranged round about the sacrificial fire or fires.

52. Cf. III.8.3 *ucchrayasva vanaspate varṣman pṛthivyā adhi |*

53. Cf. 'animal offering' in Chapter V and 'animal sacrifice' in Chapter VI.

It would be perhaps nearer the mark to say that the posts of regular size, painted white and arranged in lines would be planted to mark the boundaries of the place of sacrifice or some particular portion thereof, which was perhaps to be marked off from the rest of the place. Thus the words 'Yūpa' and 'svaru' at times and 'vanaspati' in a limited sense at III.8, refer to the main sacrificial post while the word 'svaru' in plural, having great importance in the place of sacrifice, refers to the other posts which are erected with artistic regularity there roundabout the place where sacrificial fire or fires were kindled.

IDHMA AND SAMIDH :

The word Idhma in all its occurrences in the RV. is used in the sense of sacrificial fuel,⁵⁴ which is to be kept ready for the purposes of a sacrificial performance. No specific information about the type of wood chosen for the purpose is forthcoming from any of the R̥gvedic passages but it becomes clear that it was a very laborious task to collect fuel for the sacrificial purposes as indicated at IV.12.2 (idhmaṁ yas te jabharat śāśramāṇaḥ) and IV.2.6a (yas ta idhmaṁ jabharat siṣvidāṇaḥ) where the person is said to be sweating while collecting the fuel. The fuel appears to consist of small sticks, which are required to be kept ready before the beginning of the sacrificial performance (I.94.4, III.18.3, VIII.45.2, X.61.9). They were apparently dried sticks as suggested by the metaphor in the Puruṣa-sūkta (X.90.6, Grīṣma idhma), where it is identified with the hot season. A person keeping such fuel ready at the sacrifices is qualified as 'Idhma-bhṛti' at VI.20.3 (dabhītir idhmabhṛtiḥ pakthyarkāḥ |).

SAMIDHS :

Thus while the word 'idhma' appears to be used in the sense of fuel kept ready for sacrifice, the words 'samidh' or 'samidhs' seem to be used when the fuel is employed to kindle fire.

Thus offering a stick, the poet requests Agni to accept it (II.6.1, imaṁ me agne samidhaṁ imāṁ upasadaṁ vaneḥ |); when dried sticks are added to fire in succession, how the fire burns brightly is graphically described in the Viśvāmitra Āpṛī Hymn (III.4.1, samit samit sumanā bodhi asme). It is with this idea in mind that 'idhma' and 'samidhaḥ' are separately mentioned in the well-known metaphor of Puruṣa-sūkta where 'idhma' is identified with 'grīṣma' and 'samidh' are said to be twenty-one (X.90.15, triḥ sapta samidhaḥ. . .). That the samidhs used to be arranged in some groups for the purposes of sacrifice can be clear also from III.2.9 (tisro yavhasya samidhaḥ pariḥmano) or I.164.25 (gāyatrasya samidhastisra āhuḥ |) and III.1.2,

54. I. 94.4; III. 28.3; IV. 2.6, 12.2; VIII. 45.2; X. 61.9, 90.6.

VI.16.11, and VIII.43.12 (agne samidhbhirīmahe) where Agni is said to be propitiated and requested with some arrangement of the samidhs.

LADLE (JUHŪ) :

The word Juhū is used strictly in the sense of a ladle only in four places in the Ṛgveda; at I.145.3 (tamidgacchanti juvhaḥ), where ladles are said to be going towards Agni, at VIII.43.10 (udagne tava tad ghṛtādarci rocata āhutaṁ | nimsānaṁ juvho mukhe), where Agni's rising flame is said to be kissing the ladle that is pouring the ghee; at VIII.44.5 (upa tvā juvho mama ghṛtāciryantu) and at X.21.3 (tve dharmāṇa āsate juhūbhiḥ siñcatiriva |), where Agni's possession of eternal laws is said to be as outstanding as the sprinkling (of the ghee) by the ladles. At other places in the Ṛgveda, the poets appear to refer to 'Juhū' metaphorically, the metaphor apparently based on the frequent and enthusiastic proceeding of the ladles in the sacrifices. Thus the human tongue singing the hymn is said to be 'juhū' (cf. I.58.7, 61.5, II.27.1; IV.4.2) and the flame of Agni is also referred to as 'juhū' (I.76.5; VI.11.2).

UPASECANĪ : DARVĪ :

The word 'upasecanī' is used in the sense of a 'ladle' twice in the Ṛgveda : X.21.2 and X.105.10. In the latter passage it is distinguished from 'Darvī', possibly on account of the distinction in the workmanship. Thus while the 'upasecanī' is said to be variegated in appearance, the 'darvī' is said to be stainless, possibly due to its polished surface so that ghee would not cling to it (cf. śriye te prśnirupasecanī bhūt śriye darvirarepāḥ). At times ghee appears to be offered simultaneously as indicated at V.6.9, (ubhe suścandra sarpiṣo darvī śrīṇiṣa āsani |), where Agni is said to be giving place to both the ladles (darvī) in his mouth. The two names have a derivative significance; 'Darvī' signifying its being fashioned from the wood (dru) and 'upasecanī' signifying the action of sprinkling ghee from near the fire (upa sic). Thus the soma-cup where the pressed soma-juice was stored is also referred to as 'upasecana', apparently because soma-juice was poured from it in the fire. (cf. X.76.7, duhanti ūdhar upasecanāya).

SRUC⁵⁵ : SRUVA :

The word 'sruc' is used in the sense of ladle for various purposes more than a dozen times in the Ṛgveda. It was mainly used for

offering ghee but also appears to be used for offering the soma-juice as indicated at V.41.12 (*pari sruco babṛhāṇasya adreḥ*), where it is mentioned along with the pressing stone; at X.17.13 (*yaste drapsaḥ skannaḥ paraḥ sruca*) and I.116.24 (*unninyathuḥ somamiṣa sruveṇa*), it is associated with the soma juice. Its close association with fire is indicated at a number of places (I.84.18, VIII.23.22, 60.2, X.91.15). It is qualified as 'haviṣmati' at VIII.23.22. The idea that the ladle releases everything in fire as indicated at X.105.10 (quoted above), also seems to be indicated at I.162.17 (*sruceva tā haviṣo adhvaṛeṣu sarvā tā te.....*) where all the afflictions of the sacrificial horse are said to be removed just like the 'offering' from the ladles.

Its place in a fire-ritual is indicated at I.84.18, where 'sruc' is said to be required along with the offering and ghee for worshipping Agni (*ko agnimitṭe haviṣā ghṛtena.... sruca.....*). A certain amount of workmanship appears to be required for fashioning this ladle as indicated at VI.11.5, where it is qualified as 'suvṛkti'. The offering of ghee with 'sruc' appears to be considered as a skilful act as indicated at I.110.6 (*ā manīṣāmantarikṣasya nṛbhyāḥ sruceva ghṛtaṁ juhavāma vidmanā*), where the composition of hymn is compared with the offering of the ghee by a ladle. The movement of the ladle from left to right in the process of offering is referred to at I.144.1, where the ladle is qualified as 'dakṣiṇāvṛt'.

Besides at I.116.24 (see above) the word 'sruva' is also used at I.121.6, where the offering is said to be sprinkled by 'sruva' on the place, where the fire is kindled (cf. *sruveṇa siñcañjaraṇābhidhāma* |).

GHṚTĀCĪ :

Like upasecanī, the word ghṛtācī though used as an adjective of 'Juhū' at VIII.44.5 (*upa tvā juvho mama ghṛtācīryantu....*), is used as a substantive at a number of places, indicating the association of ladles with ghee predominantly. Its employment in offerings of different kinds is also indicated at III.19.2, IV.6.3, where it is qualified as 'rātini' and 'Havirbharanti' and at V.2.8 (*Haviṣā ghṛtācī prācī eti*). Its lifting up for the purposes of offering ghee is indicated at VII.43.2 and its movement from left to right at III.6.1, where it is qualified as 'Dakṣiṇāvāt'. At VII.4.2, a number of ladles are referred to as employed at the same time. As in the case of the two 'darvis' (V.6.9 above), it appears to be customary to offer ghee simultaneously in fire by a number of priests and with this action in view, the ladles are qualified as 'samanasaḥ'. VII.84.1 refers to the ladle in both the hands (*pra vām ghṛtācī bāhvordadhānā pari tmanājigāti*). It is not referred to as being heavy even metaphorically, and hence the action appears to refer to a reverential gesture at a performance.

GHARMA :

The word is used in the sense of a pot used for heating milk⁵⁶ as well as the offering of such milk.⁵⁷ It is referred to as made of gold at V.30.15 (gharmaścīt taptāḥ pravṛje ya āsīt ayasmayaḥ). The heating of the pot is referred to at VII.70.2 (atāpi gharmo manuṣo durōṇe). The pots while hot appear to be emptied for the offering as indicated at VII.103.9 (saṁvatsare prāvṛṣi āgatāyām taptā gharma āśnuvāte visargam). How red-hot the pot was heated is indicated at V.19.3 (gharmo na vājajatharaḥ) where Agni is compared with such a pot.* The length of time, apparently, for which the pot used to be kept on fire is indicated at V.43.7,* where it is compared with the son on the lap of the father.

Soma-sacrifice was naturally more elaborate than the ordinary fire-ritual, where milk, ghee, etc. were being offered; and as it attained greater popularity in course of time, implements required for it came to be described more frequently. As it has already been remarked, separate compilation of the soma hymns apparently indicates predominant place of soma-sacrifice in the general ritual of the R̥gvedic hymns.

As suggested in the previous chapter, very possibly the sacrifice originated with a fire-ritual predominantly in honour of Varuṇa. It may be noted in this context that like the other gods, Varuṇa is never referred to as young or born. The laws of Varuṇa are ancient and to transgress them is due to ignorance (acittī yattava dharmā yuyopima VII.86.5). It is also quite significant that soma is never mentioned as quite conspicuously associated with Varuṇa, while in Indra-hymns, the god's association with soma is referred to every now and then. Thus it appears that with the arrival of Indra, soma-ritual dominated the scene and this domination changed the older form of ritual altogether. As soma-ritual and Indra grew in prominence, Varuṇa and the earlier fire-ritual fell into background. During the days of the R̥gvedic hymns, soma-ritual has retained its domination and hence we find very frequent mention of the implements of soma-sacrifice. We come across even the phenomenon of separate hymns written for the pressing-stones (X.76; 94; 175).⁵⁸

GRĀVĀṆAḤ : (Pressing-stones) :—

It is interesting to note that the pressing-stones, though referred to in dual sometimes, are praised in plural in all the three hymns (X.76, 94, 175), whereas there is not a single independent hymn for the Vedī, which is rightly styled as the centre of sacrifice.

56. I. 164.26, III. 53.14, V. 30.15, V. 43.7, V. 76.1, VII. 103.9.

57. Vide Chapter V. *for the simile cf. Chapter XII.

58. Vide Chapter XI.

The word 'grāvan' is used in singular at about twenty places.⁵⁹ At a number of places, it is referred to as producing the sound (I.83.6, 135.7, grāvā yatra vadāti; V.31.12, vadan grāvā ava, etc., V.36.4, grāveva jaritā vācam iyarti; VII.34.2, vadan grāvā...somī ghoṣeṇa; X.64.15, 100.8, 'grāvā yatra madhuṣud ucyate bṛhad |).

At I.28.1, the 'grāvan' is said to be 'pr̥thu-budhnaḥ' indicating the reference to the lower stone, which must be pretty big. It was placed occasionally on the or by the side of the altar as indicated at V.31.12 (see above). For the purposes of the sacrifice, it is the lower stone that is referred to as kept ready (cf. X.70.7, 100.9). Its significant place in the midst of the implements becomes obvious when it is said to persuade the divinity to come to the sacrifice (I.84.3). The strength of the soma-juice is said to be dependent on the strength of the pressing-stone at V.40.2, VIII.13.32, (Vṛṣā grāvā vṛṣā madah). Even when the poet is singing a hymn, his influence exercised on the soma-juice is said to be dependent on the lower pressing-stone (IX.113.6, chhandasyām vācam vadan, grāvṇā somo mahiyate).

It is referred to as 'upara' at I.79.3, X.94.3, X.175.3, very possibly on account of its situation, very close to the altar. The ox-hide is said to be spread on it (I.79.3, tvacam pr̥canti uparasya yonau). The upper stones are said to be going to the lower one (X.94.5, nyan niyanti uparasya niṣkṛtaṁ), which would also indicate that the place of the lower stone was fixed up in the place of the sacrifice.

The word 'grāvan' is used in dual only once (II.39.1, grāvāṇeva tadidartham jarethe), where Aśvins are compared with them. It may also be noted here that the word 'adri' is used at three places to indicate the two pressing-stones (I.109.3, VII.39.1, 42.1).

The word 'grāvan' is used in plural in about two dozen places in the Ṛgveda. The keeping ready of the pressing-stones for the performance of a sacrifice, is referred to at X.35.9 (grāvṇām yoge) at VIII.27.1, X.92.15 (grāvāṇo ūrdhvā abhi cakṣuradhvarām); at III.30.2 (yuktā grāvāṇo samidhāne agnau). Like Maruts, they are said to be singers having the river Sindhu as their mother (X.78.6, grāvāṇo na sūrayaḥ sindhumātarah), possibly because they were drawn from the stream of the river for the purposes of the sacrifice. They are mentioned in the Viśvedeva group and are deified along with other objects (cf. V.31.5, VII.35.7, 104.17).

ADRI :

The word 'Adri' is also used at times in the sense of the pressing-stones. The word is used in all the three numbers like 'grāvan'. At

59. I. 28.1, 83.6, 64.3; VII.33.14; VIII.26.24 etc.

three places (see above) it is used in dual. At I.109.3 (tā hi adri dhiṣanāyā upasthe), Indrāgnī are said to be the pressing-stones on the lap of the altar. At VII.39.1 and 42.1 (yuḡyātām adri adhvarasya peśaḥ), the two pressing-stones are said to be kept ready for the sacrifice.

The upper stone is said to be held in both the hands for pressing the soma-juice (VII.22.1, yamadriḥ suśāva soturbāhubhyām).

It will have been noticed that very rarely the words indicative of the pressing-stone are used in dual to signify the two pressing-stones. In the majority of the passages, the words are used in the plural. The employment of the word 'grāvan' or 'adri' in singular has indicated a reference to the lower pressing-stone, which has got an important status in the place of the sacrifice. But when the lower one and the upper ones are mentioned together, it would appear that the poets are visualising the employment of a number of upper pressing stones on the single lower stone, cf. X.94.5 (sajośasaḥ). They appear to be operating together as indicated in the following stanza ('ugrā iva pravahantā śamāyayuh' and 'sākaṁ yuktā vṛṣaṇo bibhrato dhuraḥ). cf. also X. 175.3 (grāvāṇo upareṣvā mahiyante sajośasaḥ), where the upper pressing stones (grāvāṇo) are said to be operating together on the lower one.

It is possible to imagine therefore that there was a big pressing stone, kept below either on or by the side of the altar. Soma-plant was placed on it as indicated at VIII.26.24 (grāvāṇaṁ na aśvapṛṣṭhaṁ), where Vāyu is compared with the lower pressing-stone, which carries the soma-plant on it. And then a number of persons must be starting pounding it in a systematic way. This is supported by IX.11.5 ('hastacyutebhiḥ adribhiḥ sutam somam punitana), where stones operated by the hands are said to be pressing the soma-juice. The skill in pounding depended on the proper grasp and movement of the two hands and hence the frequent reference to ten fingers.⁶⁰ For the idea of a number of men and pressing stones, pressing out the juice, cf. IX.71.3, 79.4 (adrayastvā bapsati goradhi tvaci | apsu tvā hastairduduhurmanīṣiṇaḥ ||); 86.34 (nṛbhiradribhiḥ sutah); III.34.3 (sunvanti adribhiḥ); IX.80.4 (grāvabhiḥ sutah); IX.86.23, 101.11, 107.1, 109.18, etc.

With soma-juice sticking to the pressing-stones, they are referred to as 'soma-pṛṣṭhāso adrayaḥ (VIII.63.2). With the same thing in view, they are said to be drinking the soma-juice even before the priests (X.94.2, hotuścit pūrve haviradyamāśata |). They are said to be the decoration of the sacrifice at VII.42.1 (yuḡyātām adri adhva-

⁶⁰ IX. 6.3, 8.4, 15.8, 38.3, 61.7, 89.4, 97.57 etc.

rasya peśaḥ), indicating the predominant position enjoyed by soma-sacrifice in comparison with the other types of ritual.

It is possible that the words in dual refer to smaller sacrifices, where a small quantity of soma-juice used to suffice.

ULŪKHALA :⁶¹

The word is used as 'ulūkhalā' or 'ulūkhalaka' in a solitary hymn of the R̥gveda in the first Maṇḍala (I.28.1-6). It is mentioned side by side with the pressing-stone in v.1 (yatra grāvā pṛthubudhnaḥ ūrdhvo bhavāti sotave | ulūkhalasutānām.....). Apparently the word refers to the mortar, which was used along with the pestle, in place of the pressing-stones, for pressing out the soma-juice. Associated with it were the two wooden planks, one covering the other, through which the soma-juice was to flow and hence referred to as 'adhiṣavanyā'⁶² (v.2, yatra dvāviva jaghanā'dhiṣavanyā kṛtā) and further in v.8, as 'vanaspatī'. The soma-plant was pounded by a pestle called 'vanaspatī' (v.6, vanaspatē.....sūnu....ulūkhalā). The systematic pounding is metaphorically described in v.3 (yatra nārī apacyavam upacyavam ca śikṣate |): The mortar is said to be employed in every house (v.5, gr̥he gr̥he.....yujyase).

A churning pole⁶³ (manthā, v.4.) is also referred but it is not clear how it was used for the soma-pressing.

The wooden planks referred to as 'adhiṣavanyā' (I.28.2), also appear to be referred to differently elsewhere, cf. IX.1.2. (druṇā sadhasthamāsadat) or IX.65.6 (druṇā sadhasthamāsnuse) where soma juice is said to be going to its place through the wood (dru, i.e., the plank). The same planks are also referred to as Oṇi at IX.16.1, 65.11 and X.101.14.

GOḤ TVAC :

At I.28.9, the remains of the soma-plant, after the juice has been pressed out, are said to be placed on the ox-hide (ucchiṣṭamni dhehi goradhi tvaci). But the hide is generally said to be placed on the lower pressing stone. cf. IX.79.4 (adrāyastvā bāpsati goradhi tvaci |); also IX.65.25, 66.29.

Soma-juice extracted by pounding was made to pass through a strainer, which is referred to very frequently.

61. VMH. I. p. 158.

62. It may be noted that in the A.B. VII.32.4, the ox-hide is referred to as 'adhiṣavana carma'; while in the R̥gveda the slightly different word 'adhiṣavanyā' is used in quite a different sense.

63. VMH. I. p. 160.

PAVITRA :⁶⁴

IX.67.19 (grāvṇā tunno abhiṣṭutaḥ pavitraṁ soma gacchasi) describes the stage at which the juice is made to go across the strainer. cf. also IX.6.3, 37.1, etc. The sound produced by the flow is referred to at IX.96.6, 17, 21, 106.14, 107.22. The strainer is referred to as made of sheep's wool (avyo vāraḥ, IX.6.1, 7.6, etc. meṣyaḥ vāraḥ, IX.8.5, 107.11, etc.) It is said to be rather coarse as it should prevent the dregs from choking it up (IX.15.6, evā.....paruṣā yayivān ati). The dregs are described as left behind (IX.69.9, sutaḥ pavitraṁ ati yanti avyayaṁ hitvī vavriṁ), while the juice flows forth. cf. also IX.78.1 (gr̥bhṇāti ripramaviḥ asya tānvā.....). As soma passes through it, the strainer is said to be his cloak (IX.70.7, nirṇigavyayī). The strainer is said to be made of thousands of woolen fibres (IX.91.3, sahasraṁ aṇvaṁ..... vi yāti). White-coloured wool appears to be preferred for straining as indicated at IX.107.13 (arjuna atke avyata) and at IX.91.3 (pathibhiḥ..... adhvasmabhiḥ....aṇvaṁ vi yāti.)

Various kinds of vessels are mentioned in connection with the soma-ritual.⁶⁵ Out of the vessels mentioned in the Aiteraya Brāhmaṇa⁶⁶ Pūtabhṛt Ādhavaniya, Sthālī and Udañcana⁶⁷, are not referred to in the Ṛgveda at all. The word 'droṇakalaśa' too does not occur, but 'droṇa' and 'kalaśa' are separately mentioned (see below). The word 'amatra', which is used in the sense of a vessel for sprinkling the soma-juice in the Ṛgveda, is not referred to in the Brāhmaṇa literature, indicating that it has gone out of vogue by the time of the Brāhmaṇas, though it was so popular in the days of the Ṛgveda so as to give an epithet 'amatin' (VI.24.9) to Indra.

AMATRA :⁶⁸

At II.14.1, adhvaryus are asked to sprinkle soma juice with 'amatra's (amatrebhiḥ siñcatā madyamandhaḥ). cf. also V.51.4 (amatre pariṣicyate); VI.42.2 (...amatrebhiḥ ṛjīṣaṁ); X.29.7 (asiñcannamatraṁ indrāya). All these references indicate the close association of amatra vessels in the soma-sacrifice in honour of Indra.

AVABHṚTHA :

The word is not used in its well-known sense of the 'purificatory bath' in the Ṛgveda but as a vessel of soma juice as we shall see below.

Macdonell believes that both the 'Dikṣā' and 'Avabhṛtha' were known to the Ṛgveda,⁶⁹ without specifying any passages in the

64. VMH I. 203, 308.

65. Cf. Geldner—Vol. III. pp. 6-8; ABH. Vol. II. pp. 488-89 F.N. PRV. p. 255.

66. VII. 32.4.

67. At V.44.13 the word is used in its derivative sense 'lifting up'.

68. V. I. Vol. I. p. 30.

69. ERE. XXI 614b.

Ṛgveda which would make his inference possible. Dr. Deshmukh agrees with him.⁷⁰

It should however be noted that Dīkṣā is not referred to in the Ṛgveda at all and there does not appear to be any indication whatsoever to believe that such a rite was known as a part of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice as the scholars would have us believe. We come across references to the sacrificers, performing the rites after choosing their priests; but we do not come across any rite afterwards meant for the purification of the sacrificer, which is apparently a later innovation.

Avabhṛtha is referred to only once in the Ṛgveda at VIII.93.23 (iṣṭā hotrā asṛkṣatendraṁ vṛdhāso adhvare | acchāvabhṛthamojasā ||). Sāyaṇa understands the word as 'the final day of the sacrifice (antya-divasa)'. Grassmann⁷¹ and Geldner⁷² construe it as 'the purificatory bath'. Griffith⁷³ construes it in the sense of 'cleansing bath', adding that the word apparently refers to bath or the vessel in which the soma-plants were rinsed and purified. Prof. Velanker⁷⁴ renders the word as 'Avabhṛtha', adding that the technical sense of 'final bath' may have been meant.

It may be noted that the word denotes something at the place of sacrifice towards which the delightful offerings (iṣṭā hotrā i.e., the soma-juices) are said to be flowing with force (ojasā). 'Avabhṛtha' therefore very possibly refers to the vessel (of that name like Aśvattha or samvaraṇa below), towards which the soma-juices flow. The sequence of verses 23 and 24 which cannot be otherwise understood as Geldner⁷⁵ has pointed out, can be followed only with this meaning, which is also supported by its derivation from 'bhṛ with ava', indicating the place towards which the soma-juice flows. It may also be noted that 'ojasā' also is best understood only this way. For the idea of soma flowing down, cf. IX.88.6 (vṛthā samudraṁ sindhavo na nīcīḥ sutāso abhi kalaśān asṛgran',⁷⁶ where soma-juices are said to be flowing towards the vessels like the rivers to the sea. cf. also IX.67.14. For the idea of force with which it flows, we find the word 'ojasā' used at IX.65.14 and IX.106.7 is more specific, describing the point in the same way as our passage does. (cf. Pavasva devavitaye indo dhārābhirojasā | ā kalaśān.).

AŚVATTHA :

At I.135.8 (atrāha tad vahethe madhva āhutaṁ | yamaśvattham upa tiṣṭhanti jāyavaḥ ||), the word 'aśvattha' is used in the sense of

70. RVL p. 340.

71. Wort.

72. Der Ṛgveda Vol. II. p. 418. but expresses uncertainty about the meaning (F.N.).

73. HRG Vol. II p. 241 F.N.

74. Vel. B.U.J. XVI Part 2, 1947. p. 11.

75. Ibid.

76. Note the same root is also used in our passage.

a vessel of the name in which soma-juice was placed and which is said to be attended to by the priests.

ĀHAVA :

The word is used in the sense of a vessel where soma was stored after pressing. (I.34.8, VI.7.2, X.101.5, 112.6). At I.34.8, three such vessels are associated with Aśvins (traya āhāvāḥ). At VI.7.2, Agni is said to be a big 'āhava' (Mahāmāhavam abhi saṁ navanta), as he receives ample soma-juices. At X.101.5, the large vessels are expected to be kept ready at the time of the soma-pressing (nirāhāvān kṛnotana). At X.112.6 (pūrṇa āhavo madirasya madhvo yaṁ viśva idabhiharyanti devāḥ), it is referred to as a big vessel full of soma from which all the gods are given offerings. It appears to be made of wood as indicated at X.101.7 (droṇāhavam).

KALĀŚA :⁷⁷

The 'kalaśas' appear to be vessels commonly used in the sacrifice as they are mentioned very frequently. Soma-juice is said to be flowing towards them (IX.17.4, 67.14) noisily (IX.18.7, 75.3, 85.5, 96.24). The cow's milk is said to be mixed with soma-juice in the kalaśas as in the camus (IV.27.5, IX.8.6, 72.1, 74.8, etc.). As other 'kalaśas' were known, those used for carrying the soma were distinguished as 'soma-dhāna' (IX.97.33). They are merely referred to as 'soma-dhāna' at IX.108.16.

Indra and Viṣṇu are metaphorically referred to as 'somadhāna kalaśa' at VI.69.6 as ample soma-juice was offered to them. Even the priests are said to have drunk 'kalaśas' in the sacrifices (X.167.3, tavāhamadya maghavannupastutau...kalaśān abhakṣayam |).

They appear to be a number of small vessels of a particular size, filled separately and possibly earmarked for a divinity at the place of sacrifice. Thus cf. III.32.15 (āpūrṇo asya kalaśaḥ svāhā |). This is also indicated at IX.86.16 (somaḥ kalaśe.....śatayāmnā pathā), where soma-juice is said to be flowing in a hundred-fold way towards the kalaśas.

KOŚA :

Kośa appears to be used in the sense of a large vessel for storing the soma-juice (II.16.5, VI.54.3, IX.23.4, 36.2, 86.1, 87.1, 107.12, etc.). It is said to be made of gold at IX.75.3.

GRAHA :

At X.114.5, twelve small cups of soma-juice are referred to (grahān somasya mimate dvādaśa). For the idea of a number of

77. VMH. I. 167, 83 ff.

small vessels, see 'kalāśa' above. Grāhas thus appear to be similar to the kalāśas, so called perhaps as they were specifically meant for certain divinities at a later stage of the ritual.

CAMASA :

The word has a special importance on account of the interesting reference to the 'camasa' of Tvaṣṭr said to be made into four by the Ṛbhus, which act particularly is said to have given them a place in the midst of the divinities. Derived from the root 'cam' like 'chamū', it has the sense of a drinking vessel, used in a sacrifice. A new cup of Tvaṣṭr is referred to at I.20.6 (uta tyaṁ camasaṁ navam tvaṣṭurdevasya niṣkṛtaṁ). As compared with 'chamūs', which are broader vessels, chamāsas perhaps were smaller ones as many such vessels are said to be meant for Indra at I.54.9 (tubhyedete bahutā adridugdhā...camasā indrapānāḥ). This is also supported by their being referred to as 'devapāna' (I.161.5, IV.35.5, X.16.18). 'Camasa' is said to be very dear to the gods (priyo devānām).

It was made of wood as indicated at I.161.1 (na nindima camasaṁ yo mahākulo bhrāturdruṇa id bhutimūdimā) where the Ṛbhus are assuring Agni that it was not an insult to the camasa but glory to the tree that it was made into four. The same fact is indicated also at X.68.8 (niṣtajjabhāra camasaṁ na vṛkṣāt |).

In describing the precautions necessary for a soma-sacrifice by the metaphor of fighting, the poet warns the sacrificers to see that the vessels are not leaking and are fortified properly at X.101.8 (mā vaḥ suśroccamaso dṛmhatā taṁ |).

The innovation introduced by the Ṛbhus in the old camasa of Tvaṣṭr was apparently of great sacrificial importance as it has given a place of honour in the sacrifice to the Ṛbhus.⁷⁸ Tvaṣṭr also appears to have occupied a significant place in the ritual before the Ṛbhus came on the scene, as is indicated at I.161 (quoted above), where they are giving a defence of their action and at I.161.5 (camasaṁ ye devapānam anindīṣuḥ), where Tvaṣṭr is said to be charging them as having desecrated the drinking vessel of the gods. The same fact about Tvaṣṭr is also indicated at X.76.3 (go arṇasi tvāṣṭre aśvanirṇīji prēmadvāreṣu adhvarān aśīṣrayuḥ), where some mixture of soma and milk seems to have been associated with Tvaṣṭr as an innovation introduced by him. Dadhyac is said to have revealed the 'madhu' to Aśvins, which is said to be a secret of Tvaṣṭr (I.117.22, sa vām madhu prā vōcadrtāyan tvāṣṭram yad dasrāvapikakṣyam vām |). Tvaṣṭr's skill as an artisan who fashioned certain vessels for the offering of soma-juice to the gods, is referred to explicitly at X.53.9

78. Cf. my paper on the Ṛbhus in B.U.J. XXI 1952.

(*tvaṣṭā māyā vedapasāmapastamo bibhratpātrā devapānāni śantamā* |). He is also said to have fashioned an axe for Brahmanaspati (X.53.9cd). Tvaṣṭr's mighty work is said to be supported by Agni at III.7.4 (*mahitvāṣṭram ūrjayantīrajūryam stabhūyamānam*.....), which apparently is the one, concerning the sacrifice. It is this intimate association with sacrifice that makes a poet invoke him for protection in all the sacrifices (V.5.9, *yajñe yajñe na udava* |).

Thus it would be clear that Tvaṣṭr was occupying a place of importance in the sacrificial world by his manifold service to the cause of sacrifice. It is for this reason that the work of the Ṛbhus came to be criticized for some time.

It should be noted that the old vessel of Tvaṣṭr is said to be 'made' into four and not broken into four (cf. I.161.2, IV.35.4), thus indicating that the Ṛbhus substituted the old vessel by four new handy vessels. The interesting description at IV.33.5 (*jyeṣṭha āha camasā dvā kareti kaniyān trīn kṛṇavāmetyāha | kaniṣṭha āha caturaskareti* |), possibly indicates the fact that after some discussion the old vessel was decided to be made into four. The idea seems to have originated with the necessity of replacing the old vessel, which for some reason or the other was found unsuitable for the purposes of the sacrificial performance.

It appears however that the employment of a 'camasa' did not form part of an ordinary sacrificial performance; otherwise along with *droṇa*, *kalaśa*, etc., it would have been mentioned in the ninth maṇḍala. The vessel of Tvaṣṭr also does not find any reference in that maṇḍala and hence it is possible that both the vessel of Tvaṣṭr and the four vessels of the Ṛbhus that substituted it, were employed in some specialised performance, as would also be suggested by I.117.22 (quoted above), where a secret of Tvaṣṭr is referred to.

CAMŪ :⁷⁹

They are referred to very frequently as two broad and hollow-in-the-middle vessels, in which soma-juice was made to flow after purification, before being taken up in other vessels. The word 'camūṣu' is used in almost an equal number of passages as the word 'camū' is used. At VIII.2.8, three 'camūs' are said to be full of soma-juice (*tisraḥ camvaḥ supūrṇāḥ*). Their shape has made their comparison with the heaven and earth possible (cf. I.64.33; III.55.20). It is not clear whether they were meant to be kept one over the other as the earlier comparison would imply so as to form an enclosure as indicated at IX.107.10 (*jano no puri camvorviśad hariḥ*). The two vessels were possibly used for the mixing of milk with the soma-

79. Cf. VMH. Vol. I. p. 164.

juice as indicated at IX.86.47 (camvoḥ ā samajyase gobhiḥ) and at IX.93.3 (mūrdhanam gāvaḥ payasā camūṣu abhiśrīṇanti |). After purification soma-juice is said to be going to the camūs (IX.103.4, 'somaḥ punānaḥ camvorviśad hariḥ, 97.2, camvoḥ pūyamaṇaḥ'; also IX. 97.48, 107.10.) and as such, is also referred to as pressed out in the camūs (VI.57.2, IV.18.3, VIII.82.7, 8; X.24.1), or sitting in the camūs (IX.62.16, 72.5, etc.).

TRIKADRUKA :⁸⁰

The word is used in plural in the R̥gveda at I.32.3, II.11.17, 15.1, 22.1; X.14.16. Sāyaṇa explains the word as a type of sacrifice. As the word 'kadru' is used in the sense of a vessel for storing soma-juice at VIII.45.26 (apibat kadruvaḥ sutasya), where Indra is said to have drunk the juice from the vessel of that name, the word may indicate a group of three vessels or even a kind of performance where the three vessels were used for keeping the soma-juice.

DRONA :

The word is used in the sense of 'wood' at VI.2.8 and at other places, indicates a vessel made of wood. In almost all the passages VI.37.22, 44.20; IX.28.4, 30.4, 33.2, 37.6, 65.19, 98.2), the soma-juice is said to be flowing towards the 'Drona' vessels. Soma is thus referred to as 'dronyaḥ paśuh' at V.50.4. Cow's milk is not referred to in 'drona' as in the camūs. At IX.96.13, soma is said to be occupying the drona vessels where ghee was already placed before (ava dronāni ghr̥tavanti sīda) which may indicate that soma-juice was mixed with 'ghṛta' in these vessels. In a general way, perhaps these different vessels were specifically employed for mixing up different things with the soma-juice.

DHIṢAṆĀ :⁸¹

At I.96.1, IX.59.2 and X.17.2, the word is used in the sense of a vessel for soma-juice.

NIṢKṚTA :

The word appears to be used at places in the sense of a vessel towards which the soma juice ultimately flows. The idea of the employment of the word has apparently come from the general sense of the word 'niṣkṛta' as a place of residence or the place intended to be reached. The vessel being the place, towards which the soma had ultimately to go, came to be styled accordingly. Thus 'soma' is said to be flowing towards the 'niṣkṛta' of the gods (IX.78.1, 86.7,

80. V. I Vol. I. p. 329.

81. V. I. I. 399-400.

śuddho devānāmupayāti niṣkṛtaṁ) or towards the 'niṣkṛta' of Indra: (IX.64.15, Indrasya yāhi niṣkṛtaṁ; IX.101.6;vṛṣā....indrasyā-bhyeti niṣkṛtaṁ). This may indicate that vessels were earmarked for certain gods occasionally.⁸²

PĀTRA :

In a general sense as a 'vessel' or 'vessels' used for soma-juice, the word 'pātra' is used at I.175.1, X.53.9 (see quoted above) where Tvaṣṭṛ is said to have fashioned vessels for the drinking of the gods (devapānāni), at X.105.10⁸³ (yayā sve pātre siñcase) and at X.44.5 anādhṛṣyā tava pātrāṇi dharmaṇā). At X.44.5 and 105.10, the pātras are said to belong to Indra. cf. also VI.44.16 (idaṁ tyat pātraṁ indrapānaṁ). This also indicates as in the case of 'niṣkṛta' the idea of earmarking certain vessels for certain gods in a sacrificial performance.

ŚĀDA :

At IX.15.6 (ava śādeṣu gacchati), the word appears to be used in the sense of a vessel or vessels which are referred to as 'Droṇa' in the following stanza.

SAMVARAṆA :

At IX.107.9, the word indicates the vessels to which soma-juice flows after it is mixed with milk, curds, etc (cf. anūpe gomāṇ gobhirakṣāḥ somo dugdhābhirakṣāḥ samudraṁ na samvaraṇānyagman.). It denotes an enclosure derivatively. Agni is said to be coming out of enclosure. (VII.3.2, mahāḥ samvaraṇādasthāt.) As Agni and Soma are frequently compared with a horse, soma too can be associated with an enclosure. The simile is particularly apt as describing how the different things mixed with soma-juice in the vessels become identified with it even as different rivers with the ocean.

HOTRA :

The words Hotra, Potra, Neṣṭra, Brāhmaṇa are used in the sense of vessels through which the soma is said to be offered to different divinities.⁸⁴ Thus cf. II.37.1-4, where 'Draviṇodās' is said to be drinking soma. At I.15.9 also Draviṇodās is said to be offered 'soma' in the 'neṣṭra' vessel. At II.36.1, Indra is said to be offered 'soma' in the 'hotra'. Maruts are said to be drinking soma from the 'potra' at II.36.2d and I.15.2. Indra is said to be offered soma in the 'Brāhmaṇa' at I.15.5 and II.36.5.

82. Cf. 'camasa' above; 'pātra' below.

83. See 'darvi' above.

84. It may be noted that the words do not signify the vessels always but also as the duties of the respective priests, indicating that such names were coined occasionally. Thus 'Neṣṭra' at II. 1.2, X. 91.10; 'Potra' at I. 76.4, II. 1.2, X. 2.2, 91.10; 'Hotra' at I.76.4, II.1.2 etc.

This association of different divinities with different vessels very possibly indicates the association of the priests mainly with the worship of the divinities concerned.

'Hotriya' referred to at I.83.2 (*āpo na devīrupayanti hotriyaṃ, avaḥ paśyanti vitataṃ yāthā rajaḥ*) where the 'deviḥ āpah' are said to be 'not' approaching the Hotriya vessel, appears to be the same as 'hoṭra'.

'CARU' :

The word is used in the sense of a cauldron which appears to be heated in fire as indicated at VII.104.2 (*caruragnivān iva*), which is said to be possessed of a lid or cover as indicated at I.162.13 (*apīdhānā carūṇām*), which used to be stirred as indicated at IX.52.3 (*carurna yas tamīṅkhaye*), and which used to be opened at the time of making the offering as indicated at I.7.6 (*sa no vṛṣannamuṃ caruṃ satrādāvannapāvṛdhi*).

It is not clear as to for what purpose it was used in the Ṛgvedic ritual. It may perhaps indicate the 'gharma' vessel which was used for heating the milk or for cooking an offering and hence the necessity of the lid for it.⁸⁵

A glance at the scene of sacrifice described above can give us some broad indications of the general character and the growth of the sacrifice in the days of the Ṛgveda. The implements most commonly used indicate a simple fire and soma ritual that was performed ordinarily in the household without much of mechanical rigidity as can be seen even in the case of the fairly stereotyped ritual of the Āpī hymns.⁸⁶ The reference to the peculiar implements used in the Aśvamedha as also the various vessels associated with the soma-juice indicate the fact that the ritual was growing. The variety of the vessels with different names shows that different families were experimenting with the ritual and appear to be quite at a liberty to do it as the form of the ritual was not fixed. Words like 'saṃvaraṇa', 'niṣkṛta', etc., appear to be metaphorical expressions for certain soma vessels.

The reference to the sacrifices being performed in the vicinities of certain rivers and the absence of regular places of those performances also indicate the wide choice enjoyed by the people in the form of those performances. Ordinary performances appear to be held in the households and the bigger ones associated with some patrons, on the banks of certain rivers as indicated at V.62.6, though the latter appear to be rather as an exception than the rule.

85. There are certain implements and vessels exclusively used in the Aśvamedha hymn (I. 162) like 'ukhā' 'yūṣmanya' etc., for which see Chapter XI.

86. AHR B.U.J. 1945-6 and Chapter XI.

The stage of experimentation is also indicated in the substitution of certain implements by others as can be seen in the case of the 'camasa'. The reference to the service of Tvaṣṭṛ and the R̥bhuv indicates the enthusiastic response of the people to the cause of the sacrifice, increasing with a very healthy spirit of rivalry among them.

The variety in the names of the implements like the ladles and the vessels, may indicate the influence of different regions and the different priestly families.

The association of the altar, which was the centre of sacrificial performance, with the idea of R̥ta indicates how the sacrifice was sought to be widened in its sphere of activity so as to include the idea of an all-round progressive life within its purview. And as such the place of sacrifice, it appears, was becoming the centre of all cultural activity, a nucleus, which was providing all the vitalising energy that was necessary for the growth of a highly cultural and civilized social organism.

Chapter Five

OFFERINGS IN THE SACRIFICE

कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम् । (RV. IX. 63.5)

हिन्वानो मानुषा युगा । (RV. IX. 12.7)

SYNOPSIS :

Offerings and the course of sacrifice — as expressions of human sentiments — their significance for the sacrifice — gods distinguished on the basis of offerings — variety in offerings indicative of stages of development — circumstances determining the popularity of offerings — relative importance — Ghṛta — consequent importance of the cows — Sabardughā — Agni and the offering — Mitrāvaruṇā — ghṛta mixed with other offerings — ghṛta and the Veda, — like Agni, importance of ghṛta never diminished in sacrifice — Soma influencing the sacrifice — considered to be the best of offerings — comparatively later — first drink of soma. — sacrifice the cause of its divinity — the epithets with a bearing on the sacrifice — the soma-pressing — mixing with various substances — Tripṛṣṭha — quantity in which it was offered — Tiro'ahnya — The Savanas — Prātaḥ-savana — Mādhyandina savana — Tṛtiya savana —

Apūpa — ājya — āhuti — Ṽā — Karamba — gharma — dhānāḥ — pakṣiḥ — payaḥ — puroḷāśa — Prkṣa — Prayaḥ — Sarpīḥ — Madhu — Haviḥ — gods and the offerings — Svāhā, Vaṣaṭ — animal offerings in the Ṛgveda-hymns — Dakṣiṇā — gods and the offerings — offerings and the mantras.

The conception of sacrifice is based on the offerings to be given to the divinity for its propitiation and hence offerings can be fitfully said to be co-existent with the sacrifice. They have thus played a vital role in the origination of the institution of the sacrifice and have apparently continued to influence it in the later stages of its growth. Offerings can be said to be symbolic of what the people think about themselves and their divinities and the changing moods of the social organism can be seen to be reflected in their ideas about the offerings in the sacrifice. The hymns, while praising the gods for their greatness and glory, also serve the purpose of recommending the offerings for their acceptance. In fact the acceptance of the sacrifice by the gods is the acceptance of the offerings, offered therein.

As it will be observed later, the Ṛgvedic Aryans distinguished the gods according to the offerings they liked most and hence it can be realised how the popularity of the offering would change with the change in the popularity of the worship of the divinity concerned. It is in this way that the sacrifice would be instrumental in moulding the ideas about religion in both its theoretical and practical aspects.

The predominance of the soma-offering in the hymns of the R̥gveda, which has almost shadowed into insignificance other types of offerings and which is also indicated by the separate collection of the soma hymns in the ninth Maṇḍala, has led various scholars to propound different views about the R̥gvedic collection.¹ The separate collection of soma-hymns, it may be noted, does not appear to have been prompted by any necessity of a sacrificial character, though the hymns visualise a sacrificial offering during the entire course of their composition. Their compilation in two groups of (1-60) and (61-114) also appears to have a literary principle in view. The arrangement in the descending order of the hymns has been scrupulously observed in the first group of (1-60) hymns. Thus though the hymns have not been compiled with a definite ritual in view, they have apparently helped the advancement of the soma-ritual in general in the days of the R̥gveda.

There is a variety of other offerings which is occasionally indicative of the popularity of the worship of a deity during a certain period and in general of the growth of the idea and practice of the sacrifice.

The popularity of a particular material as offering or offerings in the R̥gvedic sacrifice seems to have been determined by three different factors, *viz.*, availability of the material, the idea of divinity to which the material was to be offered and the condition under which the offering could be given. It is for this reason that the relative importance of the various materials employed in the R̥gvedic sacrifice has to be noted clearly, so that some idea about the way in which the sacrifice has advanced can be obtained.

GHṚTA :

The offering of 'ghṛta' appears to be the commonest of all the offerings, inasmuch as it seems to have been offered both independently as well as along with some other offerings. The reason for this vogue is quite obvious. The sacrifice has originated and grown on account of the peculiar role of Agni, who is said to be conveying the oblations and sacrificial performances to the gods. The offering of ghee would keep the fire blazing and would facilitate the offerings of other oblations as well. Besides it was an offering which could be easily accessible to all. It is this easy accessibility of the offering which must have made people sacrificially minded at the early stages of the sacrifice and as such can be surmised to be the earliest of the offerings.

1. VMH Vol. I. p. 202 where he propounds the view about the RV. Samhitā being a 'Hotr—purohita-samhitā'. MaxMüller (ASL p. 247) thinks that the RV. Samhitā is not a 'hotr-samhitā' (for quotation of the view cf. Chapter I p. 5 above). For discussion of the view of the ritualistic version of the RV. Samhitā cf. (chapter I pp. 9-11 above and LEV. Renou pp. 3-7.)

It is this offering which made the cow, from whose milk it was prepared, occupy an important place in the social life of the people. Cows came to be considered as indispensable and their service to the cause of the sacrifice came to be glorified in different places. Such a cow came to be known as "Sabardughā". Such cows are referred to in a Viśve-deva hymn along with the other gods. cf. III. 55.16 (ā dhenavo dhunayantāmaśiśviḥ sabardughāḥ śaśayā apradugdhāḥ....). Ṛbhus are credited with the fashioning of this sacrificial cow at I.20.3 (takṣan dhenuṃ sabardughām). cf. also VI. 48.11, X.61.11, etc. It is said to belong to Agni at X.69.8. Indra is metaphorically said to be such a cow at VIII.1.10 and Dyāvāprthivī at III.6.4.

The cows in general therefore are referred to as guarded by Indra and are said to be recovered by him along with Bṛhaspati when they were stolen away by the Paṇis. The interest that Indra has shown along with Aṅgirasas,² perhaps the originators of the idea of sacrifice, in winning back the cows indicates how the cows were indispensable for the sacrifice and how the mischief of the Paṇis was thus directed towards creating obstacles in the way of the sacrifices.³

The importance of the ghr̥ta in the sacrifice is clear as the sacrifice is called 'ghr̥tavān' (I.142.2). It is said to be kept ready for the purposes of the sacrifice along with the soma-juice at I.135.7. The sacred grass used to be sprinkled over with ghee (II.3.4, ghr̥tenāktam barhiḥ). It appears to be offered before any other offering in the sacrifice as indicated at III.21.1 (ghr̥tasya hotaḥ prāśāna prathamam niśadya). With the same idea in view, Narāśansa is said to be anointing the gods, his mind dripping with ghee (II.3.2, ghr̥tapruṣā manasā havyamundan mūrdhan yajñasya samanaktu devān).

It appears to be heated before employment in the sacrifice with the idea of purifying it. (cf. IV.1.6, śuci ghr̥tam na taptamaghnyāyāḥ; IV.10.6, ghr̥tam na pūtam). Its purity is indicated by Agni's body being compared with it (IV.10.6); the hymn of sacrifice also is compared similarly (VIII.12.4, imam stomam ghr̥tam na pūtam; VIII. 39.3, manmāni...ghr̥tam na). The ghee was primarily meant for Agni as he is said to be anointed with ghee at X.118.6 and worshipped with it cf. also III.1.7, 8; (II.7.4). It is said to be offered in the fire with a sruc (cf. I.110.6; V.14.3; VI.11.5, 'ghr̥tavatī sruc'). The ladle being mainly associated with ghee, came to be referred to as 'ghr̥tācī' (cf. chapter IV).

Unlike other gods, Agni gets a variety of epithets based on 'ghr̥ta', indicating the predominance of ghee in the Agni-ritual. This

2. Vide chapter VII for 'Aṅgirasas'.

3. For attitude of the Paṇis towards the sacrifice, cf. chapter IX.

large variety of epithets makes it clear that even when Indra and the other gods came to be worshipped with Agni as the intermediary, the emphasis on the worship of Agni as an independent individual divinity was never abandoned.

Thus ghee is said to be the food of Agni (VII.3.1, 'ghṛtānna'). With ample offering of ghee in view, he is said to be dripping with ghee (V.26.2, 'ghṛtasnu'), along with his chariot (V.17.3) and horses (IV.6.9). Ghee is said to be his glory (I.128.4, V.8.3, 'ghṛtaśriḥ'). In fact ghee appears to be considered as pervading the whole existence of Agni, as indicated by epithets like 'ghṛtayoni' (V.8.6), 'ghṛta-prasatta' (V.15.1), 'ghṛtapratika' (I.143.7), 'ghṛtakeśa' (VIII.60.2), 'ghṛtanirnik' (X.122.2).

It is thus that the idea of the close association of Agni with 'ghṛta' is conveyed in a variety of ways. Among other deities associated with the fire-ritual with ghṛta as the principle offering, Mitrāvaruṇā appear to be quite predominant. Thus they are said to be 'ghṛtāsuti' (I.136.1; II.41.6) and to indicate the offering of ghṛta to them as directly as to Agni, they are also referred to as 'ghṛtayoni' (V.68.2). This ghṛta is said to be offered to them in every sacrifice (I.136.1, yajñe yajñe upastutā).

This indicates the fact that ghṛta was the earlier offering when Mitra and Varuṇa had a place of importance in the sacrifice and that the importance of the Mitrā-Varuṇa worship decreased with the appearance of soma in the field, which brought Indra worship into prominence.⁴ As already observed, Agni retained his importance however, on account of his indispensability for the purposes of the sacrifice.

The ghṛta, being an offering by itself, was also employed in association with other offerings. Thus 'soma' is said to be mixed with ghee (IX.82.1, ghṛtavān somaḥ; X.29.6) and with 'apūpa' (X.45.9). Oblations in general are also mixed with ghee (X.14.14, ghṛtavād haviḥ; VIII.8.15 ghṛtaścyut ūrj; 'ghṛtaścyutah iṣaḥ VIII.8.16). The personified sacrificial food is also associated with ghṛta (VII.16.8, iḷa ghṛtahastā; X.70.8, iḷa devī ghṛtapadī).

The altar, on account of the kindling of fire wherein the ghee was offered, is referred to as 'ghṛtapratikā' even like Agni himself

4. At VIII.2.6 (gobhiryadimanya asman mṛgaṁ na vrā mṛgayante | abhitaranti dhenubhiḥ), people who intended to attract Indra by the offering of milk as against the soma-juice, are referred to. In the early stages, soma-juice was not well-prepared as indicated at VIII.2.5 na yaṁ śukro na durāśir na tṛpā uruvyacasam | apa sprṇvate suhārdam ||); but even still Indra is said to have preferred it to the offering of milk, indicating how the soma-offering has been associated with Indra right from the beginning. For Prof. Velankar's interpretation of the passage, cf. Vel. B.U.J. Vol. XIV 1945, p. 8 F.N.
CC-0. ASI Srinagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

(X.114.3). The sacrificers offering *ghṛta* prominently are referred to as 'ghṛtaścyutaḥ' and 'ghṛtaprayasaḥ' (III.43.3).⁵

Thus it can be said that whatever happened to the popularity of the other offerings on account of the changing ideas regarding the mode of performance, the place of *ghṛta* remained constant even as the place of Agni among the divinities.

SOMA :⁶

Never perhaps has an offering influenced the course of the sacrifice, as 'soma' appears to have done in the case of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Ṛgvedic sacrifice is what it is mainly on account of the soma-offering. Once it came to be employed, it appears to have caught the fancy of the sacrificers to such an extent that it threw into background all other offerings and came to be recognised as "the offering among the offerings" (IX.7.2, *haviṛhaviṣṣu vandyāḥ*). For the same reason it is said to be the best or the dearest or the sweetest of the offerings (IX.67.28, *uttamaṁ haviḥ*; IX.34.5, *cāru priyatamaṁ haviḥ*; I.84.4, *jyeṣṭhaṁ amartyaṁ maḍaṁ*; VII.91.5, *madhvo agram*).

The influence of the soma juice on the gods becomes further evident by the fact that a group of gods, who are specially supposed to be entitled to receive soma-juice are specifically referred to as belonging to "the soma-group" or "the brotherhood of soma". (X.92.10, *somajāmayāḥ*).

This grouping of the gods on the basis of the offering of soma, makes it clear that there were other gods, who were believed to be not belonging to the group or were receiving some other offering prominently. This appears to be the offering of milk as suggested by a simile at VIII.2.6, (quoted above), or of *ghṛta* as indicated at X.69.2 (referred to above).

Thus it is possible to infer that milk and its products were being offered as oblations in the early stages of the sacrifice and 'soma' came to be introduced later. Perhaps as a compromise with the earlier custom of offering milk and ghee, that soma came to be mixed with them. (cf. below).

This fact of the later introduction of soma as an offering in the sacrifice, also appears to be indicated by the observation of a poet in the tenth maṇḍala, who appears to have the evolution of sacrifice before his mind (cf. X.11.4, *adha tyaṁ drapsaṁ vibhvaṁ vicakṣaṇaṁ virābharat iṣitaḥ śyeno adhware | yadī viśo vṛṇate dasmamāryā agniṁ*

5. For a characteristic *ghṛta* offering of *Vadhryaśva* cf. X.69.2 (under 'Vadhryaśva' in chapter VIII).

6. Der Ṛgveda: Geldner Vol. III (pp. 1-9).

hotāraṁ adha dhīrajāyata ||). Thus it is said that Agni was chosen as the hotṛ first, which indicates the employment of Agni for the purposes of the sacrifice and then comes the production of the hymn for the same purpose (d); it is afterwards that soma is said to have been brought for the perfection of the sacrifice (adhvare in b).

As far as the relative position of Indra and soma in the sacrifice is concerned, it would appear that the soma-offering was in existence even before Indra came to be introduced in the Ṛgvedic sacrifice. This is indicated by a number of passages where Indra is said to be drinking soma as soon as he was born. cf. VII.98.3 (Jajñānaḥ somaṁ sahasa papātha); and also III.32.9, 10; 48.1. Indra's mother is said to have given him 'soma' as soon as he was born. cf. I.61.7; III.48.2 (yjjāyathāstadaharasya kāmérśoḥ pīyūsamapibo giriṣṭhām | taṁ te mātā pari yoṣā janitri mahaḥ piturdama āśīcadagre ||). It is then that soma seems to have attained greater importance along with Indra in the Ṛgvedic sacrifice, at which stage the conflict between the soma and milk offerings must have occurred (cf. VIII.2.6, f.n. p. 98 above).

Numerically, the sacrificial epithets of soma are second in importance only to those of Agni. It may be noted that a comparison of some of these epithets will give an indication of the relative position of Indra, Agni and Soma in the system of sacrifice. It will be noted that the importance of Soma for the sacrificial performance has been clearly stressed, while his position as the material of the sacrifice never appears to have been lost sight of. Thus it is significant that he is never referred to as enjoying the sacrifice as Indra and Agni are said to be doing. And hence it can be said that soma in the Ṛgveda is mainly the soma-juice, glorified on account of its importance in the sacrifice, even to the extent of its being considered as a divinity (vide Chapter III).

Thus he is said to be the banner and lustre of the sacrifice (IX.86.7, yajñasya ketuḥ; IX.86.10, jyotiḥ yajñasya). He is said to be making the sacrifice perfect and charming (IX.3.8, 86.7; IX.44.4, 9, cakrāṁścārūmadhvaram). In fact he is said to be the soul or self of the sacrifice (IX.2.10, 6.8, pūrvya ātmā yajñasya). His indispensability for the sacrificial performance as well as the place of central importance are indicated by the epithets 'Ṛtasya ṇabhiḥ' (IX.74.4); 'Ṛtasya tantuḥ' (IX.73.9); 'Ṛtasya garbhaḥ' (IX.68.5); with a very significant epithet, he is said to be 'the tongue of the sacrifice (Ṛtasya jivhā, IX.75.2). Unlike other gods his instrumentality in the sacrificial performance is indicated by the epithets, 'yajñasāadhanah' (IX.72.4) and 'vitaye sādhanam' (IX.105.3). With a greater emphasis he is said to be the chief means of the sacrifice (IX.62.29, agraṁ sādhanam).

The same fact about soma being mainly the soma-juice appears to be indicated by the reference to 'soma' as the drink of Indra and also by the details of the pressing of the soma-juice which are so frequently referred to in the soma hymns of the ninth maṇḍala.

Thus soma is said to be going exclusively to Indra (IX.69.6d, *nendrādṛte pavate dhāma kimcana*); all the soma-pressings are said to be meant for Indra (I.131.1, *indrāya viśvā savanāni mānuṣā*). Even the gods are said to have proclaimed it accordingly (IX.101.5, *indurindrāya pavata iti devāso abruvan*). In practically all the hymns of the ninth maṇḍala, the fact of soma juice flowing for Indra has been referred to (IX.1.1, 4.4., 6.7.....107.17, 110.11, etc.). Some poets, in their enthusiasm even refer to soma-juice as going directly to the belly of Indra (IX.70.10; 76.3, 81.1; 80.3, 109.18, *pra soma yāhi indrasya kuṣam*). Indra is said to be drinking soma in such quantities that the heart of Indra has become a reservoir of soma, towards which soma is asked to flow. (IX.70.9, *indrasya hārdi somadhānamāviṣa* |). All the powerful deeds of Indra are said to be done under the influence of the soma-juice (cf. IX.23.7, 85.2, 113.1, etc.). In a typical hymn (II.15), various deeds of Indra have been described and every stanza has a refrain (*somasya tā made indrasca-kāra* |), saying that Indra did all of them under the influence of soma.

This relationship between the two is emphasized by a number of other epithets. cf. 'Indrasya priyaḥ' (IX.98.6); 'Indrasya sakhā' (IX.96.2, 101.2; X.25.9); 'Indrasya sakhyam juṣānaḥ' (IX.97.11, VIII.48.2); as being the drink of Indra, 'Indrapitaḥ' (IX.8.9); 'Indrapānaḥ' (IX.96.3); 'Indrapātamaḥ' (IX.99.3). The cosmological function of entire creation along with that of Indra is ascribed to him (IX.96.5), with his divinity in view.

The details of pressing that are given practically in all the hymns also indicate that the poets have in view the soma-juice. The epithets describe the various stages of the pressing.

With the pressing by the stones in view, soma is called 'adridugdhaḥ' (IX.54.9, 97.11); 'adriṣutaḥ' (IX.72.4); 'adrisamhataḥ' (IX.98.6); 'adrau duduhānaḥ' (IX.96.10); 'grāvṇa tunnāḥ' (IX.67.19); *sutaḥ grāvabhiḥ* (IX.80.4); with the washing of the plant in water in view, he is called 'apo vasānaḥ' (IX.16.2); 'śrīṇannapaḥ' (IX.109.22, 23); 'mrjānaḥ apsu' (IX.96.10); 'ukṣtaḥ apām ūrmāu' (IX.72.7). With the pounding of the plant with both the hands in view, he is called 'coditaḥ nr̥bāhubhyām' (IX.72.5); 'mrjyamānaḥ sukarmabhiḥ daśabhiḥ' (IX.70.4); 'hinvāno goradhi tvaci' (IX.65.25). When the juice is flowing on the strainer, he is said to be 'āhitaḥ pavitre antaḥ' (IX.12.5); 'pavitraṁ abhyundan' (IX.61.4); 'pavitre vitataḥ' (IX.73.9); 'punānaḥ vāram' (IX.82.1).

With the flow across the planks in view, it is referred to as 'sutaḥ camvoḥ' (IX.108.10); 'camū sutaḥ' (IX.46.3).

When the juice has reached the vessels, it is described as 'āhitaḥ kalaśeṣu' (IX.12.5); 'kalaśam āviśan' (IX.62.19); 'kāṛṣman śvetam kalaśam' (IX.74.8). On account of its mixture with various substances, like curds, ghee, milk, soma is referred to as 'dadhyāśiraḥ' (IX.23.3, 101.12); 'unnitādadhna' (IX.81.1); 'ghṛtam vasānaḥ' (IX.82.2); 'ghṛtaścyut' (IX.77.1); 'ghṛtasnu' (IX.86.45); 'pariṣkṛtaḥ gobhiḥ' (IX.61.13); 'āvṛtaḥ gobhiḥ' (IX.86.27).

With his place on the sacred grass at the time of offering in view, he is referred to as 'barhiṣi priyaḥ' (IX.72.4, 107.15, etc.); 'barhiṣmān' (IX.44.4).

Cleanliness, required before the starting of the pressing, is referred to at IV.45.5 (yo niktahastaḥ.....somaḥ suśāva). The carrying of the soma plant with the twigs tied referred to at IX.24.2 and 27.3 (nṛbhīryataḥ vinīyase).

Considerable importance is attached to the dipping in water of the soma plant as it is referred to almost as frequently as the passage of the juice across the strainer (IX.2.3, 3.6, 31.3, etc.). It would appear that the twigs were held with both the hands by some and others would be pouring water over them as indicated at IX.65.6 (yadadbhiḥ pariṣicyase mṛjyamāno gabhastyoḥ).

Soma is said to be resting on the ox-hide along with the pressing-stones (IX.66.29, eṣa somo adhi tvaci gavām kṛlāti adhrībhiḥ; IX.101.16 'gavye adhi tvaci') indicating the placing of the plant on the hide.

Soma is described as pounded by a number of pressing-stones IX.11.5, etc. (cf. Chapter IV) with both the hands (IX.14.7; 20.6, 36.4, etc.). While the pounding would proceed, the noise is poetically described as the roaring of the bull or the lion (IX.28.4, 30.2, 33.1).

At IX.80.4 (adrayastvā bapsati goradhi tvaci), the pressing of the soma-juice is referred to as taking place, while the plant was on the ox-hide. In later days the custom has changed as remarked by Sāyaṇa⁷ and he had to explain how there was no contradiction between the Ṛgvedic passage and the custom in his time. Thus it will be noted that just as in the case of some implements⁸, the usage regarding the performance too has changed from the days of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice.

7. Sāyaṇa's bhāṣya (V.S.M. Edition p. 149). 'Yadyapi idānintanāḥ kṛṣṇājine'bhī-
ṣṇvanti na gocarmaṇi tathāpi tasmin somo miyate Krayārthm | tathā ca sati
yasmīnmiṣṭe tasyādhiṣavanacarma iti sūtrāt māna-sādhanaśyaiva gocar-
maṇaḥ adhiṣavana-carmatvābhīdhānādevirodhaḥ.

8. Cf. chapter IV. p. 86.

After the pressing and straining of the juice, it was mixed with various substances. It was more oftener mixed with milk as described poetically in a number of places. Thus it is said to be clothed in a stainlessly white garment at IX.69.5 (*amṛktena ruśatā vāsasā hariḥ nirṇijānaḥ*); cf. also IX.2.4, 8.5, 42.1, 66.13, 95.1. It is said to be mixed with milk at IX.46.4, 50.5, etc., IX.64.28, 'somāḥ gavāśiraḥ'; also IX.84.3, etc.

It is said to be made tasteful with milk (IX.62.5; VIII.2.3 'Svādumakarma gobhiḥ'). The milk is said to be added in the *kalaśas* (IX.72.1).⁹ At times milk also appears to be added before straining as indicated at IX.97.45; 107.22; IX.103.2 'pari vārānya-vyayā gobhirañjāno arṣati'. Ghee also appears to be similarly added (cf. IX.82.2 *ghṛtaṁ vāsānaḥ pariyāsi nirṇijam*).

The pure soma-juice apparently was not bright in appearance as indicated by the reference to its being made white with milk. cf. IX.104.4 'gobhiḥ te varṇaṁ abhi vāsayāmasi', IX. 105-4 'Śuciṁ te varṇaṁ adhi goṣu dīdharaṁ'.

It appears that mixing with milk was optional as unmixed soma-juice also could be offered in the sacrifice (cf. VIII. 101-10 *adhā niyutva ubhayasya naḥ piba*, Śuciṁ somaṁ gavāśiraṁ).

For its mixture with ghee, cf. IX.88.2, 86.45, 77.1; VII.47.1 while offering to Indra, soma is said to be mixed with curds cf. IX.11.6; 22.3, 81.1, 101.12; V.51.7, VII.32.4.

When Indra was offered the soma-juice along with the other gods, it appears to be mixed with other oblations, dear to those gods. Thus at III.52.7 and VIII.91.2, 'karambha', 'dhānā' and 'apūpa' are so referred to¹⁰. At VI.29.4, 'pakti' and 'dhānā' are so referred to. It is also referred to as mixed with 'yava' (cf. III.42.7 and IX.68.4).

At V. 27.5 (*aśvamedhasya dānāḥ somā iva tryāśiraḥ*), soma is said to be mixed with three substances. The same thing appears to be indicated when soma is referred to as 'tridhātu' (IX.86.46), 'tritantu' (IX.30.9) and 'tripṛṣṭha' (VII.37.1, IX.62.17, 71.7, 75.3, 90.2, 106.11). The word 'tripṛṣṭha' is interpreted differently.¹¹ It however appears to refer to the mixture of soma with three substances. In other similar compounds, 'aśvapṛṣṭha' (VIII.26.24), 'ghṛtapṛṣṭha' (I.13.5), the idea of back physically or metaphorically is always present, indicating something in close association with it.

9. Cf. under 'Kalaśa' (chapter IV). p. 88.

10. For the offerings see below.

11. Sāyaṇa on XI.71.7 as 'three savanas' and on 90.2 as 'three pṛṣṭha hymns or places of vessels or savanas'.
Ludwig: 'working in heaven, firmament and earth'.
Geldner, Grassmann "having three backs."

Those three things may be 'karambha, apūpa and dhānā' referred to at III.52.1 and VIII.91.2 or 'milk', 'curds' and 'ghee' which are referred to above as usually mixed with soma.¹²

When 'soma' was thus ready, it was employed as an offering to various gods. Its later association with the sacrifice is only relatively so. The poets of the R̥gveda already know it as a very ancient offering, indicating possibly the extent of the chronological strata over which the composition of the hymns has spread. Thus it is remarked at IX.96.11 (tvayā hi naḥ pitarāḥ soma pūrve karmāṇi cakruḥ), where sacrificial performances of old are said to have proceeded with soma.

Very frequently the soma-juice appears to be pressed in very large quantities, particularly when it was to be offered to Indra. Thus he is said to be bathed¹³ in soma-juice at I.30.1 (ā va indraṁ kriviṁ yathā... siñca). The soma-juice are said to be flowing as if on a sloping region (V.2 nimnaṁ na riyate) to Indra. Thus Indra is said to be almost an ocean to contain ample quantities of soma-juice. (V.3 Samudro na vyaco dadhe). The same thing is also referred to at III.46.4 (indraṁ somāsaḥ pradivi sutāsaḥ samudraṁ na sravata āviśanti). Peculiar measures of soma-juice are referred to at IV.32.17 (śatiṁ somasya khāryaḥ). It is for this reason that soma is frequently said to be flowing in a hundred (IX.96.14) or thousand streams (IX.13.1, 73.4, 89.1, 110.10 etc.).

It is possibly indicated at IX.63.14 (ete dhāmāni āryā śukrā ṛtasya dhārayā...akṣaram) that the soma-juice was an Aryan tradition and hence the juices are said to be flowing towards the Aryan regions. When the soma-sacrifice exercised a wider influence on the Aryan life in general, the soma offering came to be referred to as 'urging on the human generations' (hinvāno mānuṣā yugā IX.12.7) or ennobling or aryanising the whole human habitation ('kṛnvanto Viśvaṁ āryaṁ' IX.63.5).

Regarding the quality of the juice, Indra is said to be offered the strong soma-juice. As pointed above, both the varieties of soma, pure and mixed are referred to at VIII.101.10. The pure soma appears to be the stronger and hence is said to be intoxicating. (cf. V.37.4 'tivrāṁ somaṁ', VIII.62.5, 'tivrāiḥ somaiḥ¹⁴ saparyata', VIII. 82.2 'tivrāḥ somā mādayiṣṇavaḥ; also X.42.8, 160.1). It is therefore possible that milk was added to dilute it or make it more pleasant in appearance. At VI.28.8, some efficacious mixture of soma and milk with some magical effect is referred to (upedamu-paparcanaṁ).

12. At V.27.5, Sāyaṇa thinks them to be dadhi, saktu, payaḥ.

13. Cf. Vel. B.U.J. XVII. 1948 p. 8. F.N.

14. 'Sharp-tasting' Vel. B.U.J. XV. 1946 p. 19; VMH. Vol. I. p. 231.

TIRO-ANHYA :¹⁵

This variety is referred to as particularly liked by the *Aśvins*, who are associated with it at I.47.1 (*aśvinā taṁ pibata*); III.58.7; VIII.35.19.21. At I.45.10 all the gods and at III.28.3, 6, *Agni* are associated with it, indicating that the association is of secondary importance. This variety appears to be different from the '*tīvra*' variety of soma liked by *Indra*, which was strong even when it was fresh. It is not quite clear why *Aśvins* should be offered this type of soma when fresh strong juices were available. It cannot be imagined that it was done for the purposes of intoxication because, whereas *Indra* is described as intoxicated even with the fresh soma-juice, *Aśvins* are never said to be so intoxicated by the fermented soma. It is possibly indicative of the association of the *Aśvins* with their non-Aryan worshippers who might be employing such variety of soma-juice in their ritual.

It appears that it was customary to offer certain peculiar varieties of soma-juice to certain gods. Thus just like the '*trio-ahnya*' to *Aśvins*, *Vāyu* appears to be offered the pure soma-juice (cf. X.100.2 *Vāyave śucipe*). It is for this reason that the first drink of soma is said to go to *Vāyu* (cf. I.134.6 *somānām prathamah pītimarhasi*; II.11.14 *pra vāyavaḥ pāntyagraṇītim*; I.135.4). So it would be, that the soma-juice, after pressing, was first offered to *Vāyu* before mixing it with the milk.

'PAÑCADAŚA' :

At X.27.2 (*pacāni te...tīvraṁ sutam pañcadaśam niṣīñcan*). It was a strong variety of juice but we get no more information about it. Whether we accept *Sāyaṇa*'s interpretation¹⁶ or not, it is obvious that different types were being tried in the soma-offering in order to make it more effective. This idea of experimentation indicates that the sacrifice was evolving with changes in the mode of performance and hence the performance had not attained any mechanical character.

THE SAVANAS :¹⁷

Whenever soma may have come to be introduced in the *ṚgVedic* sacrifice, the idea of a specialised rite as a '*Savana*' appears to have been introduced with the prominence of the *Indra*-worship.

15. VMH. Vol. I p. 237.

16. *Sāyaṇa*: 'Pratiprabhṛti pañcadaśasamkhyākāsu tithisu śuklapakṣe ekottara vṛddhyā parṇāni jāyante | Kṛṣṇapakṣe tu tadvannihīyante | evambhūtatvāt pañcadaśaḥ soma ucyate | Yadvā trivṛt-pañcadaśa stomopetaṁ mādhyandina-savanakamityarthah | The alternative explanations of *Sāyaṇa* indicate that his interpretation is a conjectural one.

17. VMH. I. p. 256-262.

It is clear that 'savana' is conceived as quite distinct from an ordinary soma-pressing. Whereas soma-offerings are associated with all the deities, 'Savanas' are restricted to the worship of a limited number of divinities.

The idea of 'Savana' appears to have originated with the idea of distinguishing between the soma offered to Indra from that offered to the other divinities, as the 'soma' must have come to be offered to all the divinities when it came to be introduced as an offering. The distinction appears to have been drawn on the basis of the quantity of soma-juice pressed out and the continued soma-pressing to have been designated as the 'Savana'. This would also be necessary on account of the large quantity of soma required to be offered to Indra. (cf. under 'soma' above).

This association of Indra with the 'Savana' is also indicated by the mention of his presence even when the 'Savanas' are said to be offered to some other divinities. It would thus appear that though the 'Savana' was introduced for the sake of Indra, some other divinities also were sought to be associated with the soma-ritual as it had grown in its association with Indra. Thus it is remarked by a poet that Indra alone is associated equally with all the savanas. (I.131.2 *Viśveṣu hi tvā savaneṣu tuñjate samānamekaṁ*) He is said to be worshipped in all the savanas (X.50.4 *Viśveṣu savaneṣu yajñīyaḥ* cf. also I.173.8; X.111.5). The majority of the savanas are said to be going to Indra (VII.22.6 *bhūri hi te savanā*; X.89.16 *purūṇi tvā savanā*; also VI.47.14, 96.6).

Thus it will be observed that it was out of the idea of assigning certain amount of prominence to the divinity, that a particular aspect of sacrifice was being evolved, supporting our view about the evolution of the idea of divinity through the medium of sacrifice in gradual stages, which are dependent on the worship of the divinities either individually or jointly.

All the three savanas do not appear to have been in existence when the idea of savana originated. This has been inferred even on the basis of the complicated ritual associated with the third savana by Dr. M. Haug¹⁸ and may possibly be indicated by the continuation of the two pressings in the Avesta ritual. The introduction of the third savana appears to have been prompted by the idea of bringing the savanas in line with the three stations of the Sūrya (IV.54.4 *ye te trirahan savitaḥ savāso dive dive soubhagamāsuvaṇti*; cf. also VIII.1.29 where Indra is said to be offered hymns thrice a day). The work of the Ṛbhus in connection with the soma-vessel associated with the ritual and their consequent accommodation in

18. ABI p. 35....."that we must ascribe to it quite a different origin than to the two other libations."

the third savana, as also the reference to the residence of the Ṛbhus with the god Savitr (I.161.13, I.110.3; IV.33.7) are worthy of note in this context as they indicate how the new aspects of sacrifice were being evolved in association with the divinities.

PRĀTAḤSĀVA:

At III.28.1 (juṣasva no haviḥ puroḷāśaṁ jātavedaḥ | prātaḥsāve ||), Agni is asked to enjoy a 'puroḷāśa' in the morning libation. In the course of the hymn (v.4 puroḷāśm...tava bhāgadheyam and v.5 puroḷāśamāhutam), it is said to be a special offering to Agni, though the soma was pressed (and reserved for some other divinity or divinities). As a side-offering, it also seems to be offered to Indra in all the three savanas as indicated at (III.52-4-6). In the morning libation, when soma was given to a number of deities, the first offering appears to be made to Agni. (X.112.1 prataḥsāvaḥ tava hi pūrvapītiḥ |)

When Ásvins were offered a soma-pressing, it appears to be the one in the morning as indicated by their epithet 'prātaryāvānā' (II.39.2, V.77.1) and by that of their chariot, 'prātaryāvan' (X.40.1, 41.2) or 'prātaryuj' (I.22.1, X.41.2).

It should however be noted that as hard and fast rules in this regard were not made to prevail, Ásvins are also said to be associated with the other 'Savanas' as well. This association with the one or the other savana seems to be dependent on the popularity of the god in the cadre of the gods.

MĀDHYANDINA SAVANA :

The mid-day soma-pressing is said to be exclusively reserved for Indra. Thus it is said at IV.35.7 (prātaḥ sutamapibaḥ haryaśva, mādhyandināṁ savanāṁ kevalam te |), that though Indra may have been offered soma in the morning rite, the mid-day pressing was entirely his own. Indra is said to enjoy it (V.40.4 mādhyandine savane matsadindraḥ and VI.47.6). This fact of the mid-day savana belonging to Indra is more emphatically stated at VIII.37.1-6, where the statement (mādhyandinasya savanasya vṛtrahannanedyā pibā somasya vajrin |) forms the refrain of the hymn. At this savana, along with a 'puroḷāśa' 'to Indra (III.28.4), the fried grains (dhānā) are said to be offered to the horses of Indra (III.52.5). Some people appear to be mixing curds with soma at this offering as indicated at X.179.3 (mādhyandinasya savanasya dadhnaḥ piba |). At III.32.3, he is said to be drinking along with his troop of the Maruts. At times, a special pressing appears to be held in honour of Indra as indicated at X.96.13 (apāḥ pūrveṣāṁ harivaḥ sutānām atho idam

savanam kevalam te |). In a general way, Indra appears to be associated with the first two pressings as indicated at VIII.13.13 (have tvā sūre udite have madhyandine divaḥ |).

TRṬIYA SAVANA :

Though it appears to be offered in the evening, it is merely referred to as 'the third savana' as against the time—specifying designations of the two other savanas. It is very intimately associated with the R̥bhus¹⁹, though in a solitary passage, Ásvins are also said to be drinking at it. (VIII.57.1 nāsatyā tr̥tiyam savanam pibāthaḥ |). It would appear that the third savana was introduced to accommodate the R̥bhus, as they are said to have made it by their skill (X.35.9, yatr̥tiyam savanam ratnadheyam akṛṇudhvam svapasyā suhastāḥ |). They are referred to as invited for it on account of their skilful work in fashioning a chariot for the Ásvins (IV. 36.2 tān ū nvasya savanasya pītaye....r̥bhavo Vedayāmasi |). They are said to have been offered the third savana (IV.34.4 pibata vājā r̥bhavo dade vo mahi tr̥tiyam savanam madāya |), and they are requested to give glory after receiving soma in the third Savana at IV.35.6.

Thus it can be observed that though 'soma' was offered to all the divinities, 'savana' was a sort of specialised rite which was associated with a limited number of divinities, for whose specific worship, the rite appears to have been devised.

We can now proceed to a consideration of some minor offerings as well as offerings in general, either comprising of some major offerings referred to above or an aggregate of some of the major and the minor offerings.

APŪPA :²⁰

It appears to be a special preparation meant mainly for the Maruts but offered to Indra as well on account of the latter's association with them. (III.52.7 apūpamaddhi saganō marudbhiḥ |). When it was offered to Indra, it appears to be mixed with the soma-juice (III.52.1, VIII.91.2 'dhānāvantam karambhiṇam....apūpavantam juṣasva' |). When offered to Agni, it is said to be mixed with ghee (X.45.9 apūpam deva ghṛtavantam agne |).

ĀJYA :

The word is used only in the tenth Maṇḍala.²¹ It is mentioned as distinct from the 'ghṛta' at X.79.5 (....ājyaiḥ ghṛtaiḥ....

19. Cf. my paper on R̥bhus in the B.U.J. Vol. XXI 1952.

20. V.I. I. p. 26.

21. X.53.2, 79.5, 88.4, 90.6, 122.7, 130.3.

puṣyati). Unlike 'ghṛta' it is used exclusively in the sense of a sacrificial offering. Thus the word refers to an offering in the metaphorical sacrifice at X.90.6 (vasanto asyāsīdājyaṁ) and at X.130.3 (ājyaṁ kimāsīt). It is said to be purified for sacrificial purposes (X.122.7 ājyamagne nimṛjanto adhware). It is therefore possible that the word was coined at a late stage of the sacrifice to signify the material with which the fire was anointed in the sacrificial performances. This seems to be indicated at X.88.4 (yo hotāsīt prathamō devajuṣṭo yaṁ samāñjannājyenāvṛṇāṇaḥ) where the gods are said to have anointed fire, while choosing him as their hotṛ priest.

ĀHUTI :

The word is used in the sense of an offering in general to all the gods (I.105.5, X.52.2) or to some gods mentioned specifically, Agni being more prominent among them (I.31.5; VI.1.9, 2.5, etc.), as he was to carry the oblations in general to the gods.

IS, ID, IDĀ, IRĀ :

All these words are used in the sense of sacrificial offering in general at some places. The word 'irā' when associated with 'Parjanya' (V.83.4 and 63.6) apparently refers to food in general; but when associated with Aśvins (VII.40.5, 67.10, 69.8, at all of which they are said to be going to a house possessed of 'irā' — irāvad vartiḥ) and when Agni (IV.2.5 ilāvān) and the pressing stones (X.94.10, ilāvantaḥ grāvāṇaḥ) are said to be possessed of ilā, the word can only refer to the sacrificial food.

The word appears to be used not only in the sense of sacrificial food offered to the gods, (III.54.20, 59.3; IV.50.8; VII.3.7; X.27.9), but also in the sense of food given by gods to the human beings. cf. (I.40.4; III.1.23, ilāmagne havamānāya sādha; III.22.5; VI.10.7; VII.102.3).

As the offerings are offered in the fire on the vedi, both the fire and the altar come to be described in terms of Idā. Thus Agni is called 'ilah hotā' at III.4.3 and the vedi is called 'the place of idā' (III.23.4, ilāyāspade; 29.4, 'ilaspade' at I.128.1; VI.1.2; X.70.1, 191.1).

When the materials of sacrifice came to have their importance stressed, as can be seen in the case of the pressing stones, the sacrificial offering also came to be personified first, which became a stepping stone to its deification later.

Thus we see in the case of Ilā that the sacrificial offering has been personified (cf. I.188.8; II.1.11, 31.4; VII.16.8, yeṣāmiḷā ghṛtahastā durōṇe api prātā niṣīdati). It is partly in a metaphorical way and partly with the idea of deification that Agni is called the son of Ilā (III.29.3). As Agni is kindled out of the offerings in a way, he is said to be kindled by Ilā (III.24.2, ilā samidhyase). With the

vessel containing the material of offering placed on the sacred grass in view, it is said at VII.44.2 ('ilām devīm barhiṣi sādayantaḥ') that the goddess Ilā is seated on the grass. With the importance of Ilā in the sacrificial performance in view, Ilā is said to have been created by the gods for the guidance of the human beings. (I.31.11, devā akṛṇvan nahuṣasya viśpatim | ilāmakṛṇvan manuṣasya śāsanim ||)

The word 'Iṣ' similarly refers to the food offered to the gods at I.111.2, 53.4, 47.8; VII.64.3.

It refers to the food given by the gods as a result of the sacrificial performances: I.12.11, 30.17, 88.1 (ā yāta varṣiṣṭhayā iṣā).

ŪRJ :

At some places the word is used in the sense of strengthening drink or food offered to the gods. Thus Agni is said to be not getting exhausted because of the food offered. (I.128.2, 'sa na ūrjāmupābhṛtyayā kṛpā na jūryati'; II.11.1, 'imā hi tvā ūrjo vardhayanti'). As such he is referred to as "ūrjo napāt" (I.58.8; II.6.2; V.17.5, etc.). Just as strength is to be given to the gods through the offerings, so is strength to be obtained from them and hence like 'iṣ', the word is used in both the senses. Soma is said to be the pillar of strength (X.44.4, ūrjaḥ skambham). So it is possible that the word originally referred to the sacrificial food and drink and later came to be used in the sense of strength by 'lakṣaṇā' as it was instrumental in giving strength both to the gods as well as men. It can also be seen that the mutually beneficiary nature of the sacrifice is indicated hereby.

KARAMBHA :²²

The offering of 'karambha' seems to be given to the god Pūṣan (VI.57.2, karambhamanya icchati), who is specifically referred to as 'karambhāt' (the eater of karambha) at VI.56.1. Along with other offerings, it is referred to at I.187.10. It was also offered to Indra in association with Pūṣan being the characteristic offering of the latter (cf. III.52.7, Pūṣanyate te cakṛmā karambham); but when offered to Indra, it appears to be mixed with the soma-juice (III.52.1; VIII.91.2, karambhiṇam.....somaṁ).

GHARMA :²³

The offering of hot milk is referred to at a few places and as suggested above,²⁴ it appears to be given particularly to Aśvins along with the soma-juice (cf. VIII.9.7;²⁵ VIII.9.4, ayaṁ vām gharma

22. V.I. Vol. I p. 138.

23. Cf. 'gharma' chapter IV. p. 82.

24. Ibid.

25. Cf. 'ā somaṁ.....gharmaṁ siñcāt..cf. also VIII.87.2 pibataṁ gharmaṁ madhu-mantamaśvinā |.

aśvinā stomena pari śicyate). There is mentioned an offering called 'ajasra gharma' at III.26.7 (ajasro gharma havirasmi nāma). As indicated in Chapter IV, extreme heating for the purposes of the offering is referred to at V.19.4.

It is not clear why this custom of offering hot milk in the sacrifice came into existence, nor why it should be so closely associated with the Aśvins. There appears to be some ceremonial connected with the offering of hot milk as it is referred to at V.30.15 (gharma-ścit taptah pravṛje ya āsit) as 'Pravṛj'. It appears to be similar to the Pravargya²⁶ of the later days as the offering of hot milk is common to both. It is therefore possible to surmise that gharma offering came to be introduced along with the worship of Aśvins and as the worship of the deities had a comparatively limited support, the offering of 'gharma' has not occupied a prominent place in the R̥gvedic sacrifice.

DHĀNĀḤ :²⁷

The word is used in the sense of grains used as a secondary sacrificial offering along with some main offering. Thus they are said to be dipped in ghee at I.16.2 (imā dhānā ghṛtasnuvaḥ). It appears that grains of similar size and quality were specifically used for this purpose (III.35.3, dive dive sadṛśiraddhi²⁸ dhānāḥ; cf. also III.52.7, 8). They are also expected to be offered to the horses of Indra, who were also to be fed when Indra was supposed to be engaged in receiving the sacrificial soma-juice (III.35.7, kṛtā dhānā attave te haribhyān.....tadokase).²⁹ They are said to be mixed with the soma-juice which is offered to Indra in the mid-day and evening libations at III.52.5 (mādhyaṇḍinasya savanasya dhānāḥ) and III.52.6 (tṛtiye dhānāḥ savane). The soma is referred to as 'dhānāvat' (III.52.1; VIII.91.2). When they were thus to be mixed with the soma-juice, they appear to be roasted earlier (IV.24.7, ya indrāya sunavat somamadya pacāt paktiruta bhr̥jjāti dhānāḥ; VI.29.4, sa soma āmiślatamaḥ suto'bhūt | yasmin paktiḥ pacyate santi dhānāḥ ||). Indra is said to be eating the grains and drinking the soma-juice (X.28.1, jakṣīyāt dhānā uta somaṁ papiyāt |).

It should be noted that this particular offering appears to be exclusively employed in the soma-sacrifice to Indra. Thus at III.43.4 the 'savana' to Indra is qualified as 'dhānāvat' (dhānāvadindrah savanaṁ juṣāṇaḥ ||). Indra's close association with those grains which are very frequently offered to him is referred to in a simile at VIII.70.12 (tvaṁ na indrāsām haste śaviṣṭha dāvane | dhānānām

26. Cf. Pravṛj—chapter VI. p. 131.

27. V.I. Vol. I. p. 398; VMH I. p. 230.

28. Vel. B.U.J. Vol. III.1935 'of the same (high) quality'.

29. Indra is referred to as 'tadokas' at VII.29.1; Cf. also IV.49.6.

na saṁgrbhāya ||), where Indra is said to have a grasp over the cows even as over the grains.

PAKTIḤ :³⁰

The word is used in the sense of a preparation which accompanies the soma-juice and seems to be exclusively employed in the Indra-worship. Thus at IV.25.6, *suṣveḥ paktiṁ kṛṇute kevalendraḥ*) and at IV.25.7 (*vi suṣvaye paktaye kevalo bhūt*), Indra is said to be exclusively favourable to the persons, who offer the soma-juice accompanied by the cooked preparation. It was possibly a liquid preparation which used to follow the offering of the Puroḍāśa (IV.24.5, *ādīt paktiḥ puroḍāśaṁ riricyāt*). VI.29.4 (*yasmin paktiḥ pacyate*) may indicate that it was cooked in the soma-juice; but the grains which are already roasted previously and later mixed with soma-juice are also referred to (*yasmin santi dhānāḥ*). This appears clear even from IV.24.7 (*pacāt paktiruta bhṛjjāti dhānāḥ*), V.29.11 (*pacan paktiḥ*) and VII.32.8 (*pacatā paktiḥ*), where the preparation is said to be cooked, while the 'dhānās' are said to be roasted.

PAYAḤ :³¹

The word which is generally used in the R̥gveda in the sense of 'milk' or 'water', is specifically used in the sense of milk offered in the sacrifice at a few places. It should be noted that though milk was very often used for mixing with soma-juice in the Indra-worship, it never appears to be offered in its pure form to Indra. At X.100.2 Vāyu is said to like the drink of milk (*gaurasya yaḥ payasaḥ pītimānaḥ*). At I.153.4, Mitra and Varuṇa are said to receive the drink of milk and at I.121.5 and VI.52.10, the Viśvedevas are said to be offered milk. At the latter place (*viśve devā...juṣantām yujyaṁ payaḥ*), the offering is said to be suitable, possibly referring to its being given in a particular form.

From its employment only in the worship of Mitra, Varuṇa and Viśvedevas, it is possible to surmise that this offering, which was current at an earlier stage, fell into insignificance with the advancement of Indra-worship and the soma-cult and was later revived when the idea of Viśvedevas was introduced for ensuring general amity in the sacrificial worship.

PITU :

In the hymn I.187, Pitu is glorified as a general name for the offering in the R̥gevdic sacrifice as sacrificial gifts are said to follow from it (V. 11, *taṁ tvā vayaṁ pito vacobhīrgāvo na havyā suṣūdima |*)

30. V.I. I. p. 463.

31. V.I. Vol. I. p. 490.

PUROLĀŚA :³²

It appears to be a preparation, cooked and dressed in a particular manner as indicated at III.28.2 (puroḷā agne pacatastubhyaṁ vā ghā pariṣkrtaḥ). It is said to be acceptable to Agni (III.28.1, 3.6) and Indra (III.41.3, 52.2, 3, 8; IV.32.16; VI.23.7, etc.). In the specialised Indra-worship, it is said to be offered in all the three 'savanas'. (III.52.4-6). At IV.24.5, it is said to precede the offering of 'pakti'. It was apparently offered before the offering of soma-juice as indicated at VI.23.7 (puroḷāśaṁ rarāṇaḥ...piba somaṁ).

Puroḷāśa seems to be particularly employed with the soma-ritual as indicated by the large majority of the above passages, where it is said to be enjoyed by Indra along with the soma-juice and the 'dhānās'.

PRKṢAḤ :

The word is used in the sense of food offered to the gods, or brought by the gods as a result of their propitiation in the sacrifice. In the latter sense, the word is used at I.73.5; II.1.6 (food brought by Agni), at VI.35.4 and VII.36.5 (by Indra). With Aśvins and their chariot, however, the word is used very frequently (cf. I.34.4, 47.6; V.77.3; VI.62.4, 63.7; VII.74.5; X.106.1). With the offerings in the morning in view, the dawns are said to be "prkṣa-prayajaḥ" at III.7.10. The word is used as offering to Agni (at I.71.7, 127.5, 141.2, 178.4, II.1.15; VIII.23.3) and to Maruts (at II.34.3). When referring to the offerings to Aśvins, the word is qualified as 'pakvāḥ' (cf. V. 73.8, 74.10, 75.4). With Mitrāvaruṇā at VII.60.4 and Aśvins at IV.45.2, the food is referred to as mixed with honey. (madhumantaḥ). Three-fold food is said to be carried in the chariot of the Aśvins at IV.45.1 (prkṣāso.....trayaḥ).

PRABHṚTI :³³

The offering as nourishment to gods (from the root bhr) is indicated by the word.³⁴ At II. 24.1, the word refers to the offering to Brahmanaspati and at III.36.1 to Indra. It is specifically referred to as an offering in the sacrifice at VII.38.2 (prabhṛtau ṛtasya).

PRAYAḤ :³⁵

The word is used in the sense of sacrificial food in general in addition to the soma-juice. It appears to be arranged in a particular way round the fire before the gods are invoked to receive the offer-

32. VMH. I. p. 228.

33. VMH. I. p. 155.

34. The word does not refer to offering at V.32.7.

35. VMH. I. p. 212.

ings. Thus a hymn is said to be sevenfold on account of 'prayas' at IV.5.6 (manma....prayasā sapta-dhātu), indicating a particular arrangement. In a general way, the 'prayas' is said to be placed side by side with the soma-juice (cf. III.30.1, sunvanti somam dadhati prayāmsi; also X.91.9). The sacrificer or sacrificers, who keep ready the food are referred to. (cf. 'prayasvān, III.59.2, VII.73.2, etc.; 'prayasvantah' I.60.3, III.52.6, etc.). At VIII.64.6, they are referred to as 'sutavantah' and 'prayasvantah' indicating that soma is not included in 'prayas'. At a number of places, 'prayas' is said to be well-arranged ('sudihta', I.135.4, VI.15.15, VIII.60.4). X.53.2 (arādhī hotā niṣadā yajiyān abhi prayāmsi sudhitāni hi khyat) indicates that the food was arranged round about the place of fire, as in that case alone, the fire could see it. The same fact is stated in a very interesting simile at I.169.3 (agnīsciddhi śmātase śusūkvān āpo na dvīpaṁ dadhati prayāmsi) where 'prayas' is said to be surrounding Agni as the waters surround an island.

SARPIḤ :

It is said to have been yielded by Sarasvatī along with 'milk' and 'honey' at IX.67.32^{cd}, indicating that the ceremonies with the offerings used to be held on the banks of the river. It is associated mostly with Agni. It is said to be offered to Agni in a ladle (V.6.9). Agni is given epithets with it; 'sarpirāsutiḥ' (II.7.6, V.7.9, X.69.2) or 'sarpirannaḥ' (X.27.18). Besides Agni, the epithet is applied only to Mitra at VIII.74.2. This indicates that the word was used in the sense of 'ghee' in a prominently Agni ritual.³⁶

MADHU :³⁷

The word is mostly used in the sense of 'soma' when it is meant to be an offering in the sacrifice (I.19.9, II.19.2, IV.3.3, X.64.15, 100.8, etc.). It is not quite certain however whether it may not refer to honey, when it is used with the Aśvins. It is true that the Aśvins are said to be drinking soma but they cannot be imagined as surpassing Indra, who is the soma-drinker par excellence. Madhu is once associated with Indra (VI.20.3) where the word refers to 'soma'. With Aśvins, however, the word is associated significantly. The epithets like 'mādhvī', 'madhū-yuvā' and 'madhu-pātamā' used exclusively of Aśvins, the epithets 'madhuvarṇa' and 'madhuvāhana' used of the chariot of Aśvins (vide Chapter III) and the characteristic mention of 'madhu' with them at IV.43.5a, IV.45.3, X.24.6, indicate that honey was particularly offered to them. It is significant that they are even compared with bees in respect of their intimate association with honey (cf. X.106.10, āraṅgareva madhverayethe

36. For its association with Mitra and Varuṇa cf. chapter III, p. 58 and p. 98 above.

37. VMH. I. p. 241. V.I. II pp. 123-24.

sāragheva.....), where 'āraṅgara' is apparently a species of bees. For association of sāragha bees with honey, cf. VIII.4.8.

It appears that the region, where the Aśvinā worship originated, abounded in honey and as such it had come to be offered to them and it was comparatively later that they came to be admitted to the regular Ṛgvedic pantheon and offered soma. But honey continued to be offered as a remnant of its previous association with the Aśvinā worship.

HAVIḤ AND HAVYA :³⁸

The words are used in the sense of offerings in general in the hymns of the Ṛgveda. 'Havirvāt' (I.72.7), 'havyavāt' (I.12.6, V.6.5) and 'havyavāhana' (I.44.2, etc.) are exclusively used as epithets of Agni with his peculiar role in the sacrifice in view. Even his tongue (X.8.6) and his lustres (X.188.3, rucaḥ havyavāhiniḥ) are said to be carriers of oblations. Only once are the priests referred to as such (III.43.1, tvāmīme havyavāho havante). With the emphasis on the ownership of the oblations in view, the sacrificer is once referred to as the lord of oblations (I.12.8, haviṣpati). The words 'haviṣkṛtaḥ' and 'havirdā' are exclusively associated with the sacrificers (cf. I.153.3, IV.3.7, VII.68.6, VIII.60.15, X.66.6; cf. also I.13.3, 166.2, VIII.102.13).

The words 'haviradaḥ' and 'haviṣpāḥ' (X.15.10) are exclusively used of the Pitṛs.

Among those who would put obstacles in the way of the sacrificial performances, appear to be the sorcerers as well as some, who would attempt to spoil the oblations prepared for the sacrifice (cf. VII.104.21, indro yātūnāmabhavat parāśaro | havirmathinām). In a solitary place, the horse is referred to as an oblation going to the gods (I.162.4, haviṣyamṛtuśo devayānam). An oblation instrumental in bringing long life is referred to at X.161.3 (śatāyuṣā haviṣā).

At two places, certain names of the offerings have been mentioned, (cf. 'pratha' and 'sapratha' at X.181.1 and 'gharma' or 'ajasra gharma' at III.26.7, ajasro gharma havirasmi nāma).

At X.91.15, 'havis' appears to refer to solid offering as contrasted with soma and ghr̥ta (vide Chapter IV). In this way, though the oblations in general were so referred to, a distinction appears to be drawn in favour of soma, which apparently came to be considered as the oblation par excellence and as such is referred to in glorifying terms at IX.7.2 (havirhaviṣu vandyah).

38. V.I. II. p. 501.

HOTRĀ :

At a few places (I.18.8, 36.7, VIII.93.23, etc.), the word appears to be used in the sense of offerings possibly made by the hotṛ priest. It may be noted that there is no other case of the offering being known by the name of the priest, though the hymns³⁹ and vessels⁴⁰ are so referred to.

It may be noted that a preparation of 'yava' cooked in cow's milk is referred to at I.135.8, indicating the wide choice exercised in the employment of offerings, and consequently the elasticity of the ritual in general.

After the discussion of the offerings in all their variety, it will be desirable to take into account the exclamations like 'svāhā' and 'vaṣaṭ' as they were employed in the sacrifice along with the offerings and the idea of 'dakṣiṇā', as it appears to have originated out of the conception of offerings in the sacrifice and also because it was offered in the course of the sacrificial performance.

SVĀHĀ AND VAṢAṬ :⁴¹

These exclamatory remarks are found to have been employed in connection with the offerings in the sacrifice, possibly with the idea of recommending them to or facilitating their acceptance by the divinities.

Out of these, 'svāhā' appears to be earlier in origin than 'vaṣaṭ' as indicated by its more frequent mention in the hymns and particularly its mention in the Āprī hymns, which indicate a form of generalised sacrificial performance.⁴² It is also significant that the 'vaṣaṭkṛti' is mentioned in the fairly late hymns in the R̥gvedic collection. At I.31.5, it is mentioned side by side with the offering (ya āhutiṁ parivedā vaṣaṭkṛtiṁ). This utterance vaṣaṭ is said to give some striking touch to the hymns,⁴³ indicating the mystical significance sought to be associated with the utterance along with the utterance Svāhā.

Svāhā appears to be uttered when the offering was ready to be offered as indicated at III.32.15 (āpūrṇo asya kalaśaḥ svāhā) and X.2.2 (svāhā vayan̄ kṛṇavāmā havīṁsi)⁴⁴ cf. also I.110.1, II.35.1, 50.1, VII.3.7, 59.6, VIII.8.5, 34.10, 35.24. Between the two, vaṣaṭ appears to be uttered earlier as indicated at II.36.1 (pibendra svāhā prahutaṁ vaṣaṭkṛtaṁ) and thus it would be that the final touch was supposed to be given by the utterance of 'Svāhā'.

39. Vide chapter II and chapter VII under 'Hotr'.

40. Vide chapter IV.

41. VMH. II. 182, 187.

42. AHR.B.U.J. 1945-46.

43. Vide Vaṣaṭ in chapter X; ABI p. 17.

44. Cf. also last verses of the Āprī hymns I. 13, 142, 188 etc.

Three more such utterances are referred to in a solitary hymn of the Ṛgveda (I.162) viz. 'iṣṭa', 'vīta' and 'abhigūrta'. This would indicate that new appendages to the offerings were being invented with the evolution of the mode of sacrificial performance.

It is not quite clear how the words 'svāhā' and 'vaṣaṭ' came to be invented for the association with the sacrificial offering. But we can see how the word 'abhigūrta' came to be employed at a later stage. The root 'gr' with 'abhi' is used in a general sense 'to receive joyously' both with the patrons as well as the divinities. Thus the patrons, welcoming the hymns of the poets, are said to be receiving them well with gifts to the poets (I.54.7, ukthā yo vā abhigrṇāti rādhasā). Sacrifice is said to be well received by Tvaṣṭṛ at I.15.3. The offering is said to be similarly received at II.37.3. It is afterwards that in its technical sense it came to be employed at I.162.6, 12, 15.

"Astu śrauṣaṭ" is a peculiar formula used once in the Ṛgveda (I.139.1). The hymn concerned belongs to the 'Parucchepa group', known for the artificiality of its composition.⁴⁵

ANIMAL OFFERINGS :

The existence of a common animal sacrifice cannot be said to have been conclusively established.⁴⁶ It may be noted that the sacrificial beast is very rarely referred to and the details of animal offering are not available to the same extent as those of the offerings of ghr̥ta and soma.

It can be understood that when the sacrificial performances came to be introduced, eating of animal flesh must have been prevalent and consequently the idea of offering the same as well to the divinity must have occurred to some persons. But this can neither be imagined to have been done right from the very early stages of the sacrifice nor have been prevalent on a large scale. Merely on the basis of the Aśvamedha hymn (I.162), inference cannot be drawn about the common prevalence of the animal sacrifice in the days of the Ṛgveda.

The variety of epithets that Agni receives on account of his association with 'soma' and 'ghr̥ta'⁴⁷ like 'soma-gopāḥ' (X.45.5), 'soma-pr̥ṣṭha' (VIII.43.11, X.91.4), 'ghr̥ta-snu' (V.26.2) 'ghr̥tapratika' (III.1.18) etc., can be considered to be indicative of the oblations commonly offered.

Very few indications of the animal-offerings are to be come across in the hymns of the Ṛgveda. Thus at VI.1.3 Agni is referred

45. Cf. chapter XI.

46. Cf. Animal sacrifice in chapter VI.

47. Cf. chapter III.

to as 'vapāvān' and V.43.7 refers to a vessel which is heated in Agni with marrow in it (vapāvantaṁ na agninā tapantaḥ). At VIII.43.11 (ukṣānnāya vaśānnāya somaprsthāya vedhase), Agni is referred to as having the bulls and cows as his food. At III.22.4 (juṣantāṁ . . . anamivā iṣo mahiḥ),⁴⁸ the acceptance of the undiseased (anamivāḥ) food by fires very possibly indicates the animal offering. Pressing-stones are said to be associated with the cooked flesh at X.94.3 (nyūṅkhayanta adhi pakva āmiṣi). III.21 also refers to the drops of animal fat as offering (cf. IV.2.5).

Goat⁴⁹ is mentioned specifically at I.162.3 and X.164.5. At I.162.3 (eṣa chāgaḥ puro aśvena vājinā pūṣṇo bhāgo nīyate viśva-devyaḥ), a goat is mentioned as meant for Pūṣan. At X. 16.4, 5, a goat is said to be offered in Agni and Agni is requested to carry it to the Pitṛs. (avasṛja punaragne pitṛbhyaḥ . . .). The sacrificial post is referred to at a few places.⁵⁰

These few references do not give an impression of the animal offerings being prevalent commonly. The poets observing the sacrificial performances going on round about and deriving inspiration from them for fresh compositions, would certainly have referred to the animal offerings more frequently if they were in vogue.

It appears that the idea of animal offering must have come into existence at a later date, the offerings being more complicated in the process of their preparation.⁵¹ The idea of offering a horse for political sovereignty apparently presupposes the existence of the growth of political units, which can be imagined to have come into existence at a fairly late stage in the composition of the R̥gvedic hymns.

As in the case of the other offerings, we do not come across any clear reference about the animal offering being dear to any particular god, as the offering is mentioned only indirectly with Agni as the intermediary. The reference to the Pitṛs at X.164.5, may suggest that the custom of offering flesh to the Pitṛs was in existence earlier and then it came to be introduced in the ordinary sacrifice. Thus the idea of animal offerings in the R̥gvedic sacrifice very possibly came to be introduced after the introduction of the idea of the 'pitṛyajña'.⁵²

48. The fires referred to here are said to be kindled with cow-dung (puriṣyāso agnayah), indicating perhaps the custom of such kindling for the purposes of the animal offering.

49. It should be noted that the word 'chāga' is used only once in the hymn I.162. The word 'aja' is used not exclusively in the sense of 'goat'. Thus, cf. (I.67.3, II. 31.6), where it is used in the sense of 'unborn'; (III.45.2) where it is used in the sense of 'a driver'. It is used in the sense of a goat *not* meant for sacrificial purposes at X.134.6. Soma is referred to as a 'paśu' at IX.86.43 and as 'Droṇyaḥ paśuḥ' at V.50.4. Nowhere do we come across a proud mention of the animal as an offering as in the case of the soma-juice.

50. Vide chapter IV under 'yūpa'.

51. Cf. III.28 in chapter XI.

52. For 'pitṛyajña' cf. chapter. VI.

DAKṢIṆĀ :⁵³

The word 'dakṣiṇā' is used a number of times in the Ṛgveda and at a number of places, it carries the sense of 'the gift given to the priest in the sacrifice'; but it also appears that the sense of the word is evolved out of certain associations with the sacrifice.

The word is used occasionally in a metaphorical sense of the 'oblations given to the gods' or 'gifts given by the gods'.

We can understand the process by which the ideas associated with the divinity come to be associated with the human beings with a view to elevate them in importance; thus the meaning of the word 'dakṣiṇā', if associated with the divinity at an earlier stage can be understood as associated with the human beings later on. But if it is to be understood the other way, the process of deterioration with its possible causes will have to be explained and accounted for.

Bloomfield, who has discussed the point at some length⁵⁴ in connection with the meaning of the word 'dakṣiṇā' as an epithet of Uṣas, tries to fit in the meaning (as he prefers to call it) 'baksheesh' because he is attempting to point out that all the Uṣas hymns, which are believed to be particularly poetical by a number of scholars,⁵⁵ are really sacrificial in character. He ultimately wants to prove (p. 77) : "In fact, the body of the Ṛgveda hymns presupposes the ordinary form of the soma-sacrifice." He has started with the idea (p. 65) "It requires at times pretty sharp sight to see and a clear head to remember that this poetry hugs the sacrifice closely." In between, he tries to fix up the meaning of the word 'dakṣiṇā' as applied to Uṣas, saying about her (p. 69) "Ushas is the patroness of sacrifice; she is herself the sacrificial fee, because she ushers in or heralds the sacrificial day." He does not approve of the approximate meaning as an honorific adjective of Uṣas as imagined by Max Müller (p. 71) nor that of A. Bergaigne, who says, "the Dawn is the gift of heaven bestowed upon pious men as recompense for their piety", because he believes it to be, "round-about, unnecessary and un-vedic" and because he feels that A. Bergaigne "transports too many of the events in the earthly life of the Vedic Aryans to heaven." (p. 72).

It will thus be clear that his interpretation is prompted by the overall view of the Ṛgvedic hymns regarding their sacrificial nature that he has taken. It is therefore that he has been required to strain the meaning of the word to such an extent.

If 'dakṣiṇā' meant earlier "the baksheesh", where would be the point in referring to the oblations as 'dakṣiṇā' as is done at V.1.3⁵⁶

53. VMH II. 31, 99, 196.

54. RVB. pp. 69-74.

55. Among them Oldenberg (RVO p. 237) quoted on p. 72.

56. Cf. also VIII.39.5 where Agni is described as surrounded by "dakṣiṇās" (i.e. oblations—'dakṣiṇābhirabhivṛtah').

(ād dakṣiṇā yuyjate vājayanti uttānāmūrdhvo adhayajjuhūbhiḥ), where Agni is said to be licking the 'dakṣiṇā' with his flames? Certainly no one would believe that the R̥gvedic poets conceived oblations also as 'baksheesh' to the gods. The use of the word 'vājayanti' (strength-giving) as adjective of 'dakṣiṇā' is also significant.

It must therefore be admitted that the original meaning of the word was not what Bloomfield imagines it to be.

As the word 'dakṣiṇā' means 'right', 'dakṣiṇā' would, in the first instance, refer to 'the right hand side' as at II.27.11 and X.17.9. The ladles are referred to as circling towards the right-hand side (dakṣiṇāvṛtaḥ) at I.144.1. A ladle is referred to as 'dakṣiṇāvāt' for the same reason at III.6.1.

Whatever was thus given by the right hand, was considered as a liberal gift and so 'dakṣiṇā' appears to have come to mean either 'the liberal gift' of the gods or their liberality in general. It is the rich liberality of Indra that has come to be referred to as 'dakṣiṇā maghoni' at a number of places (II.11.21, 15.10, 16.9, 17.9, 18.9, 19.9, 20.9). The liberality of Indra is said to give many covetable gifts to the worshippers at VII.27.4 (anūnā asya dakṣiṇā pipāya vāmaṁ nṛbhyah) or is said to yield glory at II.18.8 (asya dakṣiṇā duhita). It is thus that Indra is said to be 'dakṣiṇāvān' at III.39.6 and VI.29.3.

Thus when the word came to mean liberality in general, it appears to have come to be applied to the sacrificial gift because it was also given liberally. This liberality in sacrificial gifts, apart from being referred to in a number of 'dānastutis', is referred to in a general way at I. 168.7 (bhadrā vo rātiḥ pṛṇato na dakṣiṇā) and I.169.4 (tvam tū na indra taṁ rayim dā ojiṣṭhayā dakṣiṇayeva rātim), by a poet, where the gift of the gods is compared with the gift of the patron in respect of liberality. Indra is said to be inspiring the patrons to give rich gifts at VI.37.4 (variṣṭho asya dakṣiṇāmiyarti). At VI.27.8, the gift of a patron is said to be unique (dūṇāśā). The sacrificer in general is referred to as 'dakṣiṇāvān' at I.125.6, VIII.97.2, IX.98.10, X.69.8, etc. For the typical gifts of Sāvarṇya⁵⁷ cf. X.62.9 and that of Nārya, cf. VIII.24.29. On account of this idea of liberality, the resting place of the horses of Indra is also described as 'dakṣiṇāvāt' at III.53.6 (vimocanaṁ vājino dakṣiṇāvāt).

It is this liberality which is associated with Uṣas, when she is referred to 'dakṣiṇā' at I.123.1, III.58.1, VI.64.1. The rich gifts would naturally be shining gifts as indicated at VIII.24.21 and X.62.11 (sūryeṇāśya yatamānaitu dakṣiṇā).

It is thereafter that 'dakṣiṇā' appears to be personified and its position in the sacrifice glorified as in the case of the pressing-stones. Thus at I.18.5, 'dakṣiṇā' is expected to grant protection along with

57. Vide chapter VIII and chapter XII.

Soma, Indra, etc. At X.103.8, it is classed along with Indra and Soma. It is personified at III.62.3 and an entire hymn (X.107)⁵⁸ is written in glorification of 'dakṣiṇā'.

At IX.71.1 (ā dakṣiṇā sṛjate śuṣmī āsadam veti), the dakṣiṇā is said to be given first and then the soma-juice is said to be going to its place. This may indicate that sometimes the dakṣiṇā was given even before the pressing of the soma-juice. It is however also possible that this just refers to some sacrificial offerings (which also are referred to as dakṣiṇā as we have seen above) that are given before the pressing of the soma-juice.

In this evolution of the meaning of the word dakṣiṇā, we can see the evolution of the idea of sacrifice in a broad way.

Regarding the way in which the offerings were received by the gods, we come across references where the gods are said to be receiving them through Agni as well as independently. Thus Indra is said to be drinking the soma through Agni⁵⁹, cf. III.22.1, 35.9 (agneḥ piba jivhayā somamindra). At V.51.2 (agneḥ pibata jivhayā), all the gods are said to be doing so.

An intermediate stage is referred to at III.35.10 (indra piba svadhayā cit sutasyāgnervā pāhi jivhayā) where Indra is said to be drinking it either way.

At a number of places, however, Indra is said to be drinking it independently. cf. III.40.5, III.43.5; VI.41.2 (yā te kākut sukṛtā yā varīṣṭhā yayā śāśvat pibasi madhva ūrmin), where Indra is said to be drinking by his palate. At IX.72.2 (indrasya somam jāthare yadā-duhuḥ) and VIII.92.24, soma is said to be poured into the belly of Indra. It is said to be poured so as to spread in the body of Indra at VIII.17.5 (ā te siñcāmi kuṣyoranu gātrā vidhāvatu).

This appears to indicate only the emphasis on the anthropomorphic aspect of the gods as can also be seen at I.34.10, where Aśvins are said to be drinking by their mouths and at II.1.14 (āsā devā haviradanti āhutām), where all the gods are said to be drinking by their mouths. It serves the purpose of glorifying the gods concerned as being capable of independently enjoying the oblations and need not be taken to indicate any other way of offering the sacrifice except through the medium of Agni.

It may be noted that if any other way of giving the offerings to the gods were held possible, the importance of Agni in the sacrifice would have dwindled down; but as that has not happened (vide

58. Vide chapter XI.

59. It may be noted that the Soma-juice must have been offered only nominally in the fire. Very possibly it is this fact which gave rise to the idea that Indra was drinking soma independently, as the huge quantities required by Indra could not be poured into the fire.

Chapter III), these references about the gods independently receiving the offerings have to be understood as metaphorical in character.

It is clear that the hymns used to be recited while the sacrifice would go on.⁶⁰ As it will also be seen in a later chapter,⁶¹ offerings appear to be given with the recital of refrains in certain hymns (e.g. VIII. 37). The idea of reciting different portions of the hymns for different stages of the offerings, does not appear to be indicated anywhere. As indicated, however, at IX.86.32 (*nayannṛtasya praśiṣo naviyasih*, etc.), soma is given the credit of giving rise to new customs; this would show that the mode of offering was being evolved.

The offerings are described as inspiring the human society in different periods (IX.12.7, *hinvāno mānuṣā yugā*) and doing everything that is noble in character (IX.63.5, *kṛṇvanto viśvamāryam*). This has apparently been said with reference to the importance of offerings in the sacrifice in view.

Thus it will have been observed that the variety in the offerings indicates changes in the social sphere with varying customs of the Aryan society in different regions and times and reveals how the Aryans were gradually evolving their ideas about the sacrifice and moulding their notions regarding the different aspects of life in its relationship with the higher reality.

60. Cf. chapter II.

61. Vide chapter XI.

Chapter Six

THE TYPES OF THE RĠVEDIC SACRIFICE

नयन्तस्य प्रशिषो नवीयसीः । (RV. IX. 86.32)

SYNOPSIS :—

Understanding of the types rather for convenience—evolution of traditions with the sacrifice—various scholars regarding the types—Macdonell on Dikṣā and Avabhṛtha—types of later ritual not in existence—idea of classification belongs to an advanced stage—basis for such classification—three pre-requisites of the Rġvedic sacrifice—indications of the change in the ritual—due to offerings, other materials and mode of performance—soma, the cause of some significant innovations—other offerings and the ritual—advancing ritual—

Common types performed twice or thrice a day—some small details referred to—some individual rites—Atirātra—Gṛhamedhiya, possibly a small rite in honour of the Maruts—Diviṣṭi not an ordinary daily sacrifice—possibly a sort of composite sacrifice of a developed nature characterized by sumptuous gifts therein—Pitṛyajña—different forms or aspects thereof—designed on the pattern of the sacrifice to gods—separate fire employed for the purpose—origination on the bank of Saraswatī—idea of Pitṛyajña—possibly the cause of the introduction of animal-offerings in the sacrifice—Pūrvahūti—Prayāja and Anuyāja—Pravṛj—Brahmasava—Satra—Samāna—bhārman—Savana—Sahasrasāva—Somaparva—some other rites referred to without specific designations—I.80.9—Āpri type—sacrifice of a longer duration—the animal sacrifice—arguments to indicate its late origin—conclusion.

It should be noted at the outset that it is more for the convenience of understanding that we are referring to the types of the Rġvedic sacrifice in the course of this chapter. We cannot expect to come across in the hymns of the Rġveda all the elaborate classification and description of the soma and other sacrifices as in the later days, not only because the hymns were not meant for such purposes,¹ but, as indicated elsewhere, they do not appear to be earmarked specifically for any such classified celebration. But at the same time, when the system of sacrifice was evolving gradually, some traditions of performances must have come to be recognised as different from the rest by some distinctive characteristics, as can be reasonably imagined.

Max Müller,² commenting upon Rv.I.94.4, believes it to be a reference to the 'darśapūrṇamāsa', adding "Passages like this do not necessitate the admission of a full-grown ceremonial, they only point to its natural beginnings". Prof. Macdonell³ and Dr. Keith,⁴ followed

1. VMH. I. p. 202.
2. ASL. p. 259.

3. ERE XII. p. 610.
4. RPV. p. 312.

by Dr. Deshmukh⁵ believe the ritual to be of a fairly specialized type even in the Ṛgveda itself. It is even believed to have degenerated to the stage of exercising compulsion on the gods in the days of the Ṛgveda itself by Prof. Macdonell,⁶ with whom Dr. Deshmukh⁷ apparently agrees.

It may be noted that these presumptions imply the existence of a large variety of the sacrifices, which however have not been substantiated by references from the hymns, except an attempt in the direction in a few places.⁸ It is true that merely from the non-mention of the later types with their names, we cannot justifiably infer their non-existence altogether. But taking into account the general tendencies, we shall be justified in inferring that they did not exist as such and such as known to the later ritual.⁹

It may be noted that the idea of classifying the ritual performances into types belongs to a fairly advanced stage of the ritual. The classification depends upon the employment of the hymns and the offerings, the conception of the divinity and also the purpose with which the offering is made to the divinity. It also depends upon the essential view about the sacrifice, viz., whether the sacrifice is being conceived as a means towards an end or practically an end in itself.

At VII.70.6 (*yo vām yajño, nāsatyā haviṣmān | kṛtabrahmā samar-yo bhavāti ||*), the necessary pre-requisites of a sacrificial performance are said to be (1) the offering, (2) the hymn, and (3) the sacrificer. It is interesting to note that the sacrificing priests, though they have played an obviously significant part in the evolution of the sacrifice, are not prominently mentioned here, indicating that they had not shadowed the sacrificers by the emphasis on their own importance. If the word 'samarya' is understood as including the sacrificing priests along with their patrons, it would indicate the conception of joint responsibility in the sacrifice, which can be considered as a very healthy idea for the promotion of sacrifice as an institution of social importance.

An indication of the change in the ritual that has been taking place from time to time, has been given in the hymns of the Ṛgveda (I.105.4, 7 and III.55.3).¹⁰ In the beginning, this may be characterized by some alteration in the offerings or other materials of sacrifice or in the mode of performance. The variety of sacrificial implements, and the offerings are apparently indicative of changes that have been taking place in the ritual.

5. RVL, pp. 339-43.

6. Ibid, p. 614b.

7. Ibid, p. 340. cf. also Dikṣā and Avabhṛtha in Chapter IV. pp. 86-87.

8. VMH, I. p. 259; II. 61.

9. VMH, II. p. 203, indicates difference between the earlier and later Rudra ritual.

10. cf. Chapter III under 'Viśvedevas'. pp. 59-62.

Out of all the offerings, soma appears to have been instrumental in introducing new vogues in the performance as indicated at IX.86.32 (...tantum tanvāstrivṛtaṁ yathā vide | nayannṛtasya praśiṣo naviyasiḥ.... ||), where soma, while being employed in a threefold sacrifice (indicating the three savanas), is said to be leading to the new rules or traditions in the sacrifice.

This can be realised by the growth of the idea of 'savana'. When soma came to be employed in a sacrificial performance, it must have been offered whenever the performance would take place, without any specification of time. It is thereafter that the idea of specific soma-pressings in honour of certain divinities came to be introduced. While the first two savanas came to be known by the time of the day they were offered,¹¹ the third came to be known merely as the 'tṛtiya savana', indicating the previous existence of the two savanas for a pretty long time.

It will thus be observed that the ceremonial or the ritual was advancing mainly with the relationship of the offerings with the divinities in view.

From the contribution of the Ṛbhus to the cause of sacrifice,¹² it would be clear that the technique of performance used to change even with the change in the vessels in which the soma-juice was kept or through which it was offered. It is in this light that the epithet 'ṛtasya dīdhitim'¹³ (IX.102.1, 8) of soma appears to be quite significant.

Sometimes, some peculiar ritual appears to have been centred round some divinity with some offering, offered consistently as indicated at I.72.3 (tisro yadagne śaradastvāmit śuciṁ ghr̥tena śucayaḥ saparyān | nāmāni cid dadhire yajñīyāni asūdayanta tanvaḥ sujātāḥ||), where Maruts, according to Śaṅkara are said to have attained divinity by the performance of a particular type of fire-ritual for three seasons with the offering of ghr̥ta. Thus, the prevailing idea appears to be that divinity could be attained by the continuous performance of a ritual or rendering some significant service to the cause of the sacrifice as in the case of the Ṛbhus.

As fire helped the advancement of the system of sacrifice, it appears that a certain mode of kindling fire, resorted to in earlier days, came to be hallowed with certain significance, though in later days, apparently other modes of kindling fire had come to be employed. It is thus that Agni is said to be kindled according to the earlier rites at III.17.1 (prathamā dharmā anu samidhyamānaḥ) and the rest of the ritual is also said to be proceeded with similarly along the line of the ancient rules, so that it may become acceptable to the

11. Prātaḥsāva and Mādhyandina savana (cf. Chapter V).

12. Vide Bhāratīya Vidyā, Vol. XII, 1951 (pp. 163-171); also Chapter III, p. 57.

13. meaning 'one who urges on the thought of sacrifice'.

gods (cf. III.17.5, tasyānu dharma prayajā cikitvo'thā no dhā adhvarāṁ devavītau).

The advancement of the sacrifice, the prosperity it brought, the popularity it enjoyed and its progressive nature that could not be followed by some, who had to lag behind are referred to at X.44.6 (pr̥thak prāyan prathamā devahūtaḥ kṛṇvata śravasyāni duṣṭarā | na ye śekuryajñīyāṁ nāvamāruhamīrmaiva te nyaviśanta kepayah ||), where metaphorically such people are said to be incapable of mounting the boat of sacrifice and consequently sitting or sinking down.

Common types of sacrificial performances appear to be those, that are referred to as performed twice or thrice a day. They are not always connected with the soma offerings and so their origin seems to be the same as that of the savanas, viz., the typical positions of the sun during the day-time. This is made clear at VII.41.4 (uta prapitve uta madhye anhamutoditā maghavan sūryasya). Thus Agni is said to be kindled in the morning and the evening for the purposes of the sacrifice, as he is referred to as 'svadhvara' at II.2.8 (sa idhāna uṣaso rāmyā anu...svadhvaraḥ; cf. also IV.2.8, 12.2; VII.3.5, 15.8; VIII.25.21; X. 39.1, 40.4, 5). The morning rite alone is referred to at V.64.7. Morning libation to Aśvins is indicated at V.75.9, where the fire is said to be kindled at the break of the dawn for their worship.

At times, three daily sacrificial rites are referred to. They appear to be different from the savanas and mainly associated with Agni. Thus at II.18.2 (sāsmā aram̐ prathamam̐ sa dvitīyamuto tṛtīyam̐ manuṣaḥ sa hotā), where the offerings put in fire are referred to. In the Āpri ritual, the threefold rite is referred to at III.4.2. cf. IV.12.1, 15.2 (yāti agnī rathiriva), where the predominance of Agni is indicated by his comparison with a charioteer; and also VII.11.3, VIII.27.19-21, 72.9; IX.86.18.

It is thus with a particular type of sacrificial rite in view that the poet of VIII.84.5 asks 'dāsema kasya manasā yajñasya sahaso yaho | kadu voca idam̐ namaḥ ||'. It appears that certain broad details of a performance were in the view of the person and he was free to add others of his own so as to make it more efficacious. Thus this may indicate a stage where certain rituals had come to be distinguished without all the details regarding the hymn to be employed and hence the poet could use his new hymn as indicated in ȅ.

Certain performances appear to have been associated with efficacy and hence are sought to be performed repeatedly for the purpose as indicated at VIII.13.14 (tantum̐ tanuṣva pūrvyam̐ yathā vide) and at I.110.1 (tataṁ me apastadu tātate punaḥ).

A few details in the course of the performances have been referred to occasionally. Thus the priests are said to be invoking the

divinities with bent knees at (III.59.3; VI.1.6, 32.3; VII.82.4, 95.4, 'mitajñubhirnamasyaiḥ iyānā). Similarly the priests are said to be drinking the soma juice. This does not appear to be the soma juice remaining after its being offered in the sacrifice, as at no place, it is referred to as such. On the contrary, it is said that the hymns are composed or the gods are invoked under the inspiration of soma. Thus the Kaṇvas are said to be so composing their hymns at VIII.32.1 and 33.4 (made somasya vocata); a poet is said to be so invoking the divinities (I.119.9, made somasya auśijo huvanyati). The priest is said to be first drinking in quiet (X.83.7...upāmsu prathamā pibāva). It was drunk in ample quantities as indicated at X.167.3 (kalaśān abhakṣayaṁ) and is said to be making the drinker look brighter (VIII.48.6, agniṁ na mām mathitaṁ sandidīpaḥ |). It is this soma juice that is drunk, that has been referred to as addressed for welfare. (I.179.5, somaṁ...hrtsu pītaṁ upabruve; VIII.48.4, śaṁ no bhava hrda āpīta indo; 48.5; and 96.21, where Indra is compared with the soma so drunk — 'somo na pīto havyaḥ')¹⁴

Besides these general ritual performances once, twice or thrice a day as referred to above, there appear to be some specifically designated performances, some of which are associated with certain divinities though we do not get much information about their ritual character.

ATIRĀTRA :¹⁵

It is mentioned only once in the R̥gveda and is apparently a type of soma-sacrifice, though we cannot exactly say how far it was the same as the later variety of that name discussed in the Brāhmaṇas. The frogs are compared with the brahmins at the 'atirātra' sacrifice (cf. VII.103.7,¹⁶ brāhmaṇāso atirātre na some saro no pūrṇamabhito vadantaḥ). The comparison indicates that during the rite the soma vessel was kept full of the juice and the brahmins used to recite mantras sitting round it during the night. The soma offered here, does not appear to have any connection with the tiroanhya variety (vide Chapter V), though that would explain the name of the rite. The rite appears to be performed very rarely, possibly once a year, as the frogs are said to be sitting accordingly on that unique day of the year (VII.103.7cd, saṁvatsarasya tadahaḥ pariṣṭha yanmaṇḍūkāḥ prāvṛṣṇaṁ babhūva |). It appears to be customary to compose a hymn specifically for the occasion as indicated at VII.103.8b (brahma kṛṇvantaḥ parivatsarīṇaṁ).

14. cf. Vel. B.U.J., Vol. XVI, p. 14, 1947.

15. VMH, Vol. II, 233; Vol. III, 216, 298, 395.

16. cf. also the comments on hymn in Chapter XI.

GR̥HAMEDHĪYA :¹⁷

It is referred to only once in the R̥gveda at VII.56.14 (sahasriyam damyam bhāgametaṁ gr̥hamedhīyam maruto juṣadhvam), where the Maruts are asked to accept the gr̥hamedhīya. It is said to be a household (damyam) and thousandth (sahasriyam) part, indicating perhaps the existence of a bigger rite of that name. As the word "medha" indicates sacrifice (cf. I.77.3, 177.4; VIII.50.10, etc.), 'gr̥hamedhīya' appears to refer to a sacrificial rite, associated with the Maruts as they are referred to as 'gr̥hamedhāsaḥ' at VII.59.10. It is possible however that the word may stand for a peculiar offering of that name given to the Maruts.

DIVIṢṬI :

It has been construed as a general ordinary daily sacrifice by Max Müller.¹⁸ The word occurs nearly a dozen times in the R̥gveda. It should be noted that the word has been always used in the plural and particularly the form 'diviṣṭisu' occurs at all the places except one (VII.74.1) where the form 'diviṣṭayaḥ' is used. At I.45.7, 141.6 and IV.9.3 ('sa sadma pariṇiyate hotā mandro diviṣṭisu'), Agni is said to be chosen or acting as the 'hotṛ' priest at the diviṣṭi rites. Uṣas is said to be shining at the diviṣṭis at I.48.9 (vyucchanti diviṣṭisu). Chariot-steeds of Aśvins are said to be yoked at the diviṣṭis (I.139.4). Diviṣṭis are said to be invoking Aśvins at VII.74.1. At a number of places, soma is said to be offered at the diviṣṭis (I.86.4, sutaḥ somo diviṣṭisu; IV.46.1, 47.1; VIII.76.9). If they are ordinary sacrifices, why should they be said to be invoking Aśvins as at VII.74.1? Besides yajña is distinguished from the diviṣṭis at VIII.87.3 (vartir-yātamupa vṛktabarhiṣo juṣtaṁ yajñaṁ diviṣṭisu), where Aśvins are said to be coming to the sacrifice among the 'diviṣṭis'. Diviṣṭi therefore may have been a sort of composite sacrifice of the Viśvedevā type (Chapters III and XI), where offerings were given to different divinities like Aśvins, Indra and Vāyu.

The choice of a specific hotṛ priest for the purpose, the pressing of the soma juice and sacrifice forming a part of it, all indicate that the word stands for some longer performance consisting of smaller rites. This is further supported by the fact that specific attractive gifts are said to be given at the diviṣṭis. cf. VIII.4.19 (...sthūram rādhah śatāśvam), where the king Kurūnga is said to have given a sumptuous gift of a hundred horses at the diviṣṭis. This can in no way be construed with the daily ordinary sacrifices.

PITṚYAJÑA :

Some different rites, distinguished on the basis of the offerings as also the classes of the Pitṛs to whom the offerings are made, have

17. Geldner: Vol. II, p. 231, F.N.

18. SBE XXXII; Grassmann: 'devotion or prayer'; Geldner, 'Morgen opfern'.

been referred to at X.154.1 (soma ekebhyaḥ pavate, gṛtameka upāsate | yebhyo madhu pradhāvati tāṁsciddevāpi gacchatāt ||).

It appears from this passage that the idea of the Pitṛ-worship was prompted by that of the divinity-worship and hence followed its pattern. Thus the three classes among the Pitṛs¹⁹ appear to be arrived at on the basis of the corresponding classes²⁰ among the gods, Indra, Varuṇa and Aśvinā, who appear to be characteristically associated with the offerings of soma, gṛta and madhu respectively.

It is on the basis of such a distinction, that, separate seats are said to be earmarked for the Pitṛs, where they are expected to sit in the Pitṛyajña. Thus at X.15.11 (agniṣvāttāḥ pitara eha gacchata sadaḥsadaḥ sadata supraṇitayaḥ), the Pitṛs²¹ are invoked to come and occupy their respective seats.

To distinguish the Pitṛyajña from an ordinary divinity-worship, it appears that a certain fire that is to be employed for the special offerings is referred to at X.16.10, (yo agniḥ kravyāt praviveśa vo gṛham, imāṁ paśyannitaraṁ jātavedasaṁ | tam harāmi pitṛyajñāya ||), where the usual fire is separately marked (itaraṁ...). This fire for the Pitṛyajña is sought to be sublimated by the offerings of the gods also being placed in it (v.11, devebhyaḥ pitṛbhya ā). Agni is said to be knowing all the Pitṛs whether known to the worshipper or not (X.15.3, āhaṁ pitṛṇ suvidatrāṁ avitsi), just in the same way as he knows the gods (yathā devānāṁ janimāni veda).

This Pitṛ-worship appears to have originated on the banks of the river Saraswatī, where the divinity-worship too has prospered as can be noticed from the reference to the river²² particularly in the Āprī hymns. Just as the ordinary sacrificers invoke Saraswatī (X.17.7, saraswatīm devayanto havante), Pitṛs are said to be invoking her (X.17.9, saraswatīm yām pitaro havante). On account of the previous association of the Aryans with the river Saraswatī, during their lifetime they come to be associated with the river even after their departure, when their worship came to be introduced in that region. It is thus that Saraswatī is said to be delighted in the company of the Pitṛs (X.17.8, devī pitṛbhirmadanti).

It would be interesting to note how the idea of Pitṛyajña originated, though it came to be fashioned after the pattern of the divinity-worship.

While thinking of the various patterns of the sacrifice, some persons must have been naturally attracted to think of the pheno-

19. cf. Sāyaṇa on the passage: 'eṣāṁ gotrajāḥ sāmāni brahma yajñasamaye'dhiyate, eṣāṁ putrādayo yajūṁṣi brahmayajñakāle'dhiyate, ya ātharvaṇān mantrān brahmayajñārthamadhiyate |

20. vide Chapter III.

21. name of a class very possibly as Sāyaṇa suggests.

22. cf. Saraswatī in Chap IV and AHR.

menon of death just in the same way as they were led to think about the problem of life,²³ the two being as inseparable from each other as the night and the day. Both the problems appear to have come to be looked upon from the point of view of sacrifice. It appears, however, that some old ideas and impressions did prevail in the minds of the people as against the new thought in terms of sacrifice. Thus in the funeral hymns of the tenth Maṇḍala (X.14-18), we find a mixture of the old impressions of fear and the new outlook of sacrifice brought to bear upon the problem of death. It is thus that the idea of Pitṛyajña referred to in X.16.10, appears to have originated. The old idea of death as caused by some dreadful agency, which was to be guarded against, is sought to be squared with the new idea of death almost as a sacrifice, performed by the human beings. Thus talking about the first of the departed beings — Yama — who has been given a place among the gods and consequently a worship of the same pattern (cf. X.14.13-16, association with soma ghr̥ta, yajña and havis), it is said that he was the first to offer his body to death. It is almost said to be an offering in the sacrifice that he undertook to perform in the interests of the people at X.13.4 (priyām yamastanvaṁ prāirecīt), as he is said to have preferred death to immortality (X.13.4ab, devebhyaḥ kamavṛṇita mṛtyuṁ prajāyai kamamṛtaṁ nāvṛṇita) and as if to show the agreement between the precept and practice, subjected himself to be the first to undergo that ordeal.

The death is thus being looked upon almost as a sacrifice and in this idealised and glorified category, the departed souls are being thought of.²⁴ It was then natural that the pitṛs should come to be looked upon as almost the divine beings, being nearer to Yama. It is then, with a desire to offer them worship, that the idea of the Pitṛyajña was introduced.

A goat is referred to in connection with the fire kindled for the pitṛ-worship (X.16.4, ajo bhāgastapasā taṁ tapasva). As we have observed above,²⁵ excepting the Aśvamedha hymn, a goat is mentioned as an offering only here. As people must have been flesh-eaters, offering of the flesh was considered desirable for the worship of the departed ones, who were accustomed to eat it. It is possibly thereafter that the animal offerings came to be introduced in the sacrifices as well. This will reasonably explain the absence of the mention of the animal-offerings in the worship of the other divinities in the hymns of the R̥gveda generally.

23. vide my article on "the sacrificial setting of the philosophical hymns in the R̥gveda (BV. XII, 1952).

24. cf. X. 135, where corresponding to the hymns and the dakṣiṇā in the sacrifice, the hymns (v.7, gīrbhiḥ pariṣkṛtaḥ) and the gifts (v.6, anudeyi) are referred to in the Pitṛ worship.

25. vide Chapter V under 'animal offerings'.

PŪRVAHŪTI :

It appears to be a rite performed in honour of Uṣas in the beginning, as the goddess is characteristically associated with it. Thus at VI.64.5 (tvam divo duhitaryāha devī pūrvahūtau mañhanā darśatā bhūḥ), Uṣas and because of her, Uṣāsānaktā at I.122.2 and VII.39.2, are associated with the rite. It is interesting to note that with other worshippers, their desired divinities came to be associated with the rite as indicated at X.113.7 (indro manhā pūrvahūtāvapatyata), where Indra is said to have lorded the rite by his strength. It is for this reason that the worshippers of Uṣas are referring to her as the first among the other gods in the Pūrvahūti (I.123.2, uccā vyakhyad yuvatīḥ punarbhūroṣā agan prathamā pūrvahūtau). It is perhaps on account of such a conflict that the rite appears to have been made common to all the divinities as indicated at VII.35.5, where all the gods are associated with the rite.

PRAYĀJA AND ANUYĀJA :

In the two hymns,²⁶ where the Prayājas and the Anuyājas are referred to, they appear to be the offerings or the rites characterizing the offerings. Thus they are said to be the powerful portions of the oblations (ūrjasvanto haviṣaḥ santu bhāgāḥ, v.9) or rites at X.182.2, (narāśamso no avatu prayāje śam no astvanuyājo haveṣu) where they are said to be a part of the invocation. They are associated with fire in both the passages. At X.51.8 (prayājānme anuyājānsca kevalā-nūrjasvanto haviṣo datta bhāgam) where Agni is supposed to have demanded them, the offering referred to as required is said to be 'ghṛta' (X.51.8c). In fact, X.51.9, continuing to say that after the Prayāja and Anuyāja are offered to Agni, the whole sacrifice will belong to Agni (tavāgne yajñoyamastu sarvaḥ) seems to indicate that the Prayāja and Anuyāja were just the former and the latter portions of the sacrifice, they together helping the completion of the sacrificial performance. There is no trace of the association of the rites with the soma sacrifice, much less an animal sacrifice as indicated by the Brāhmaṇas.²⁷

PRAVRJ :²⁸

The word is used only once in the R̥gveda in the sense of a sacrificial rite, performed in the course of another performance indicated by a Dānastuti (V.30.15, gharmaścittaptaḥ²⁹ pravṛje ya āsīdayasmayastamu ādāya viprāḥ). In this rite, the vessel of milk was heated and it would seem that the vessel was given as a gift to

26. X. 51.8, 9; X. 182.2.

27. AHR. 1946 and comments on "Āprī group" of hymns in Chapter XI.

28. Geldner, Vol. II. p. 28.

29. For gharma as a vessel, cf. Chapter IV; and gharma as offering—cf. Chapter V.

the priest. As remarked above, this 'pravṛj' may be similar to the 'pravargya' of the later days in respect of the offering of the heated milk. The word appears to be used with derivative sense in view as would be indicated by two other words which are derived from the root pra+vrj. cf. VIII.4.6 'putraṁ prāvargaṁ kṛṇute'; VIII.22.18, 'suprāvargaṁ suvīryaṁ suṣṭhu vāryamanādhṛṣṭaṁ rakṣasvinā|. In both these words 'prāvarga' and 'suprāvarga', the idea of scattering (of rivals) is present. It is therefore possible that in the Pravṛj rite, it was customary to scatter the heated milk during the course of offering.

It however appears that the name Pravṛj was not commonly known in the days of the Rġveda. Because, whereas the gharma offering and the gharma vessel are referred to pretty frequently, the name pravṛj is not associated with them. As remarked in Chapter V, the gharma offering appears to be given predominantly to Aśvins and possibly with the scattering of this offering in view, even the hymns are said to be scattered like the barhis grass or more significantly like clouds scattered by the wind (I.116.1, nāsatyābhyāṁ barhiriva pravṛñje stomāṁ iyarmyabhriyeva vātaḥ|). The same is indicated also at VII.103.9d (taptā gharma āśnuvate visargaṁ).

It may be noted that the sequence of the mention of 'pravṛj' in v.30 (in the last verse of the hymn), would indicate that in the days of the Rġveda, it was not performed in the beginning of the bigger ritual of which it formed a part.

BRAHMA-SAVA :

The word is used at IX.67.24 (yatte pavitramarcivadagne tena punihi naḥ| brahmasavaḥ punihi naḥ||). In the previous stanza (v.23) 'brahma' is said to be purified. So the word 'brahma-sava' may refer to certain offerings or preferably rites accompanied by those purified hymns.

SATRA :

The word is used only once in the Rġveda (VII.33.13) in the sense of a particular soma-sacrifice as indicated by v.14, where the priest with the pressing-stone is referred to (grāvāṇaṁ bibhrat). It is not clear whether it necessarily refers to a long sacrificial session as Geldner³⁰ believes even though it occurs in a hymn known to be late in its origin.

SAMĀNA BHĀRMAN :

It is referred to at VIII.2.8 (trayaḥ kośāsascotanti tisraścamvaḥ supūrṇaḥ| samāne adhi bhārman). As Geldner and Prof. Velankar

30. Der Rġveda, Vol. III, p. 56.

say,³¹ it is different from the savanas. It appears however to be a rite, so designated on account of the same number of 'kośas' and 'camūs' used in it. The propriety of using three kośas is indicated in v.9 (sucirasi puruniṣṭhāḥ kṣīrairmadhyata āśīrtah | dadhnā mandīṣṭhāḥ śūrasya ||), where they are said to be required for storing (1) the pure soma-juice, (2) the juice mixed with milk, (3) and that mixed with curds. It may be noted that the word 'kośa' is used in a number of places in the R̥gveda (I.112.11, . . . etc., vide Chapter IV) in the sense of a vessel for storing the soma-juice. In the plural, the word is used with Maruts at I.87.2. Soma is said to be flowing to the kośas at IX.86.20; 88.6. Three kośas are referred to with Parjanya at VII.101.4. The word camū (vide Chapter IV) is used in plural almost as frequently as in dual but is qualified by 'tisrah' (three) only here. It is also noteworthy that three kośas and three camūs together have been mentioned only here, indicating that such an association is quite unusual. It is therefore possible to imagine that the word refers to a rite of that name.

SAVANA :

For 'snavas' as special rites performed in honour of certain divinities only cf. Chapter V.

SAHASRASĀVA :³²

The word is used twice³³ in the R̥gveda. Sāyaṇa construes the word as 'the Aśvamedha' at III.53.7 and as 'the rainy season' at VII.103.10. As the word 'sāva' is used in the sense of 'the pressed soma-juice' at X.49.7 (yanmā sāvo manuṣa āha), where Indra is indicating how he responds to the soma-pressing of men promptly, the word cannot mean what Sāyaṇa takes it to be. It is interesting to note that the word is used almost in identical passage in the Viśvāmitra and the Vasiṣṭha maṇḍalas. The phenomenon of the repetition of vv.7-11 in the Āpri hymns of the two maṇḍalas is more interesting and very possibly is attributable to the association of the two families with the Bharatas.³⁴

It is possible therefore that 'the sahasrasāva' is a peculiar somarite, that both the families officiated at, as the family-priests of the Bharatas.³⁵

31. Geldner, Vol. II, p. 282 and Velankar (B.U.J. XIV) 1945, p. 10, F.N., 'the self-same offering' as distinguished from Savanas.

32. Velankar B.U.J. 1935. Geldner, Vol. I, p. 393 and II, p. 273.

33. III.53.7; VII.103.10.

34. Vide AHR, B.U.J., 1946.

35. Vide Chapter XI on VII.103 and 'somaparva' below.

SOMA-PARVAN :³⁶

Soma-parvans are referred to only once in the R̥gveda (cf. I.9.1, 'indra ehi matsyandhaso viśvebhiḥ soma-parvabhiḥ'). At all the 'soma-parvans', Indra is said to be receiving the soma-juice. This would indicate that it was a special rite with soma-juice, exclusively in honour of Indra like the 'mādhyandina savana' (vide Chapter V). Similarly the 'parvans' of Agni worship have been referred to at I.94.4 (bharāmedhmaṁ kṛṇavāmā havīm̐si te, citayantaḥ parvaṇā parvaṇā vayan̐), where, according to Max Müller,³⁷ the Darśapūrṇamāsa sacrifice is referred to. 'Parvan' must have indicated a portion of time as indicated by the various scholars, referred to above. However as soma was pressed almost daily, there would not be much point in taking the word to refer to merely the 'days'; it would rather refer to the 'rites' performed on those days. Very possibly 'parvan' indicates the idea of a part of a longer sacrifice, where a number of such 'parvans' would complete a longer sacrificial performance³⁸ like the Sahasrasāva. It is also possible that the 'parva' refers to the different portions of the day, when specifically soma rites associated with the Indra-worship are referred to as 'soma-parvans'. Thus it would appear that the idea of periodical rites in honour of some specific divinities had already come into existence.

Besides these specifically designated rites, there appear to be some others without designations which had some special ritual associated with them.

(1) Thus, one such rite appears to be referred to at I.80.9³⁹ (sahasraṁ sākamarcata, pariṣṭobhata viṁśatiḥ | śatamenamanvanonnavuḥ — indrāya brahma udyataṁ ||). It was perhaps a form of group worship, where a thousand people would participate; twenty of them would stand around and praise, with a hundred persons repeating what they recited. Such a loudly uttered praise appears to rise (more easily) to Indra. For the idea of the hymns spoken loudly so that they may be accepted, cf. I.75.1 (vacaḥ saprathas-tamaṁ).

(2) Āprī Type:⁴⁰

The Āprī hymns appear to have in view a sort of family-ritual centred round Agni, where all the deities were used to be worshipped. As the same order of references is followed in all the Āprī hymns (though with sufficient freedom of expression) and as the families appear to be very particular about an Āprī hymn of their own, the

36. Geldner, Grassmann and Velankar (B.U.J. XVII 1948) construe as 'festive days when soma is offered.'

37. ASL, p. 259.

38. cf. VII 103.5 'sarvaṁ tadeṣāṁ samṛdheva parva, yat suvāco vadathana adhyapsu', where the idea of the completion of a whole by parts is indicated.

39. B.U.J. Vol. XVIII 1949: Prof. Velankar understands them to be the hymns.

40. For details cf. AHR, B.U.J. 1946, Section XIII, pp. 49-51.

ritual association is quite obvious. The hymns were apparently composed for a type of family rite though the name is nowhere referred to in the hymns of the R̥gveda.⁴¹

(3) At V. 45.7, (ārchan yena daśamāso navagvāḥ) and V.45.11 (yayātaran daśa māso navagvāḥ), the navagvas are said to have worshipped for ten months. It appears to be a longer soma-ritual indicated by a reference to a pressing-stone.⁴²

It would appear that when soma had become quite a common offering, so that in small quantities, it was pressed every day (cf. IX.75.4, madhordhārā pinvamānā dive dive, also IX.101.6, 107.19), some people must have thought of offering soma continuously, resulting in such longer sacrifices. It should however be noted that, it has not come to be given a specific name, because the ritual associated with it, had not apparently become complicated.

(4) It can be understood that when such continuous offerings were undertaken, some people must have occasionally failed in the performances on account of certain difficulties. Such people then would come to be ridiculed by others and hence a poet, in the very beginning of his composition, is giving an assurance that he would not abandon the performance once undertaken (cf. V.46.1, hayo na vidvān ayuji svayaṁ dhuri tām vahāmi prataranīmavasyuvarṇ | nāsyā vaśmi vimucaṁ nāvṛtaṁ punarvidvān pathaḥ pura eta r̥ju neṣati ||), where by means of a metaphor, the poet indicates how he has voluntarily got himself yoked to the chariot of sacrifice, from which he neither wants to turn back nor to be released. In the remaining portion of the hymn, more than thirty divinities have been referred to. This would indicate that the ritual of the hymn was centred round the Viśvadevas⁴³ and hence had become somewhat difficult to carry out.

It is quite possible that when the conception of all the gods to be worshipped together, was introduced in the growing system of sacrifice, the ritual adopted for the purpose must have been one which could be acceptable to all the divinities and their devotees. So by a combination of some select details from other modes of worship, the Viśvedevā ritual must have been framed and as such it must have become a type by itself.

ANIMAL SACRIFICE :

Varying views regarding the prevalence of the animal sacrifice in the R̥gveda have been referred to.⁴⁴ No satisfactory explanation has been given about its prevalence at an earlier date.

41. cf. Chapters XI and XIV below and AHR B.U.J. 1945-46.

42. Vide Navagvas and Daśagvas in Chapter VII.

43. cf. Viśvedevā type in Chapter XI.

44. Chapter I. pp. 5-8; Chapter V; ERE XII, p. 610; RPV, p. 13; ABI.

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As suggested above,⁴⁵ very possibly the idea of offering the animal flesh as an offering came into existence after the introduction of the Pitṛ-yajña. This conjecture appears to be supported on various other grounds as well.

(a) We have noted in Chapter IV, how references to the 'tying post' in the sacrificial set-up, are pretty rare. When other equipment of the sacrificial set-up, has been more frequently referred to (vide Chapter IV), there is no reason why the 'post was not so referred to, if it was commonly associated with the place and mode of the sacrifice.

(b) In the hymns, composed for the propitiation of the divinity, the offerings of ghr̥ta and soma are very conspicuously referred to as brought or offered by the sacrificers. We do not however come across any such reference to the 'paśu' or the beast of the sacrifice,⁴⁶ which should have occurred if the beasts were so commonly offered in the sacrifice.

(c) As the Āpri hymns have been forcibly employed in the Prayāja offerings of an animal sacrifice⁴⁷ by the Brāhmaṇas, it becomes clear that the Brāhmaṇas could not find any other hymns which were traditionally associated with an animal-sacrifice. Thus it would be clear that when even the Brāhmaṇas have no tradition of association of hymns with an animal-sacrifice, it is not possible to infer that the animal-sacrifice was widely prevalent in the days of the R̥gveda.

(d) Even if the process of preparation of the different oblations is taken into account, it can be realised that the process of preparing an animal offering would be a much more complicated and elaborate one. Just as the preparation of soma is described in details and also referred to in the similes (vide Chapter XII), no such reference to the animal-offering occurs in the hymns of the R̥gveda.

(e) In Chapter III, we have observed how the gods come to be given epithets on the basis of offerings made to them frequently. If the animal sacrifice were prevalent, corresponding epithets would have occurred pretty frequently in the same manner.

(f) Purity in sacrifice, with cleanliness of materials and purity of offerings have been occasionally stressed and hence animal sacrifice cannot be imagined to have been in existence at least when the essential conceptions regarding the sacrifice came to be evolved.

45. Chapter V. p. 118.

46. Ibid.

47. AHR B.U.J. 1945-46.

(g) The association of soma and the animal-sacrifice in the Brāhmaṇas appears to have led various scholars to believe in the existence of animal sacrifice in the R̥gveda as the soma-offering was common. If there was any such association in the days of the R̥gveda, it would have been referred to at least occasionally in the soma hymns of the ninth maṇḍala. It is further supported by its non-mention in III.28 (vide comments in Chapter XI), where it would certainly have been referred to if it were in existence.

Thus it will be observed that though some forms of performance have come to be distinguished from others, it appears to be more or less a distinction in the traditions at different places and times. Even when longer performances are referred to, they do not appear to be either characterized or distinguished from each other by any elaborate ritual.

Chapter Seven

THE ROLE OF THE PRIESTS IN THE SACRIFICE

रथं न क्रन्तो अपसा भुरिजो ऋतं येमुः सुध्य आशुषाणाः । (RV IV. 2.14)

प्राञ्चं यज्ञं प्रणयता सखायः । (RV X. 101.2)

ते स्याम ये रणयन्त सोमैः । (RV X. 148.3)

SYNOPSIS :—

Poets as thinkers—shaping the sacrifice through hymns—balance in the relative position of gods, patrons and the priests—mention of vipra-rājya discussed—also VIII.6.3—cause of sacrifice the aim of their life—intelligent service—the words brāhmaṇa and kṣatriya—

Evolution of the class in general—priests not a class of magicians—not shaping the ritual for their predominance—words indicating priests—family tradition giving impetus to sacrifice—tradition of the worship of certain divinities—no unbroken tradition even about the authorship—families and individual members described—duties of different priests not clearly mentioned—view about professional priests—officiating priests with their duties—Hotṛ—offerings mentioned after him—his duties—choice of adhvaryu—transition to the two-priests-stage—soma sacrifice, the reason for his introduction—udgāṭṛ—different designations indicating later introduction in the sacrifice—brahman—purohita—idea underlying—potṛ, praśāstṛ etc.—stages through which the different offices developed—

The poets of the R̥gvedic hymns were essentially the thinkers¹ of the time, who attempted to evolve ideas of social, religious and philosophical importance for the well-being, growth and emancipation of the Aryan society in general. Hymns became the means of the expression of these ideas, a practical application of which was sought to be worked out by the system of sacrifice. Howsoever the sacrifice may have originated, it was found to be a good means of experimenting with ideas of a varied nature. If the sacrifice was meant for the propitiation of the gods,² the hymns were looked upon as an important means for such propitiation and as such, it was entirely in the hands of the priests to tune up the hymns and through them to shape the sacrifice as they desired. An indication of this aspect of their role is given in X.78.1, (viprāso na manmabhiḥ svādhyah), where Maruts are compared with them for their well-thought-out hymns.

When the priest-poets thus started evolving the idea and practice of the sacrifice, they had to define their position in relation

1. cf. X.78.1.

2. 'Yajño devānām pratyeti sumnam' etc. in Chapter III.

to the divinities towards whom the sacrifices were directed, the patrons who supported their sacrificial activities and also the actual performances that they would undertake. As long as a proper balance in this triple relationship was maintained, the system of sacrifice developed on proper lines, in its turn, helping the cause of general social progress. It is for this reason that we find the social structure standing well-balanced with proper importance attached to all the prevalent sections. With the mechanisation of the idea of sacrifice however, the balance was disturbed and consequently the form of social structure also changed. We have therefore got to appreciate the way in which the authors of the Ṛgvedic hymns looked upon and cultivated the notions of this threefold relationship, as the same will indicate the nature of the sacrifice they were trying to evolve.

The discussion in Chapter III, has indicated the way in which, they have attempted to evolve their ideas about the divinity and the divine worship. Though the divinities were conceived mainly for the purposes of rendering help to human beings and the sacrifice, for the sake of divine propitiation, both the ideas were being progressively evolved. The divinities have not deteriorated merely into agencies for rendering help nor has sacrifice attained the form of merely a means of ensuring or buying the divine assistance. This has been achieved mainly by the way in which they developed the idea of their relationship with the divinities. An illustration would clarify the point. Among the divinities, Agni has got functions very much akin to those of the human priests and hence gets epithets like *hotṛ*, *purohita*, etc. It is hence that the priests could have glorified themselves to the position of Agni or brought down Agni to their level as far as the sacrifice was concerned. But we find that, in the hymns of the Ṛgveda, the importance of Agni as a divinity has never dwindled; nor have the priests been glorified beyond any reasonable proportions. At VIII.3.4 (*satyaḥ so asya mahimā grṇe śavo yajñeṣu vipra-rājye*), sacrifices are referred to as the kingdom of the priests. It merely seems to have been done with a view to emphasize the importance of the sacrifice that the priests are undertaking for the sake of their patrons, whom they are praising in the hymn. It may also be due to the idea of emphasizing their superiority over other priests. But the general tone of VIII.3, which stresses the importance of Indra on the one hand and the patrons on the other also indicates that the Kaṇva poet, howsoever self-conscious he may be, is not seeking to subordinate the gods and the patrons as far as the sacrificial performances are concerned. This may possibly have been a family-trait of the Kaṇvas, as the author of VIII.6 has expressed the notion of Indra being the means of sacrifice (v.3, *kaṇvā indraṁ yadakrata stomairyajñasya sādhanam*).

This also does not appear to be meant to be taken literally as the same poet refers further on to the fact that it is Indra, who has promoted the sacrifice under his leadership (VIII.6.22, *tavedindra praṇiṭiṣu yajño vitantasāyyaḥ* |).

Thus it may be noted that while the priest-poets have become progressively conscious of their significant contribution to the cause of sacrifice, they have not been blind to the importance of the other agencies instrumental in the growth of the sacrifice and hence have maintained their role of the followers of the system, which they aspired to develop. Thus a poet observes at VII.61.6 (*samu vān yajñam mahayam namobhiḥ* |) that he desired to exalt the sacrifice meant for the divinities. The priests appear to be glad at the thought that they could render priestly service in the sacrifice (VII.60.12.... *purohitiryuvabhyām yajñeṣu mitrāvaruṇā akāri* |) and that the gods accepted their service (VII.83.7, *satyā nṛṇāmadmasadāmupastutir devā eṣāmabhavan devahūtiṣu* |). They consider the service as almost an aim of their life as indicated at X.28.12 (*ete śamibhiḥ suśamī abhūvan, ye hinvire tanvaḥ soma ukthaiḥ*) and at IV.2.19 (*akarma te svapaso abhūma*), where the poet refers to the act of sacrifice as giving the credit of a good deed done to those who participated in the performance. The poets appear to be delighted that they were following the path of sacrifice (X.66.13, *ṛtasya panthāmanvemi sādhyā*). Some of them even aspired to convert the hostile sections to the cause of sacrifice (VII.64.3, *bravad yathā na ādariḥ sudāse | iṣā madema saha devagopāḥ* ||). At IV.2.14 (*ratham na kranto apasā bhurijorṛtam yemuḥ sudhya āśuṣāṇāḥ* |), their work is compared with the carving of a chariot and for which they have been complimented as intelligent (*sudhyaḥ*). It is this intelligent service that came to be emulated and made a poet express a desire that he should be one of those who offered the soma-worship, (X.148.3, *te syāma ye raṇayanta somaiḥ* |).

Regarding their attitude towards the patrons, it will be pointed out in Chapter VIII as to how the patrons looked upon the priests as indispensable for the purposes of sacrifice. Just as the priests came to be compared with Agni in respect of the similarity of certain functions in the sacrifice, (cf. the epithets *purohita* and *hotṛ*), so too the patrons came to be compared with Indra in respect of his liberal gifts (cf. *maghavan*) and glory (cf. *sūri*) in the sacrifice. It is for this reason that the author of II.27, prayed that he should never be in want of a liberal patron (vide Chapter VIII).

It is well known that those who composed the hymns and officiated at the sacrificial performances developed into a class of brahmins at the end of the R̥gveda period (X.90.12). In the R̥gveda, the word 'brāhmaṇa' appears to be used in the sense of a composer

of the hymns (I.164.45, *catvāri vāk parimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmaṇā ye maṇiṣiṇaḥ* |) or one who officiates at the rites (I.15.5; II.36.5; VI.75.10; VII.103.1, 7, 8, where the words 'sominah' and 'vratacārīṇah' indicate it; VIII.58.1, 'yo anūcāno brāhmaṇo yukta āsīt, kāsvit tatra yajamānasya samvit, where the choice of a 'brāhmaṇa' for a rite is referred to; cf. also X.71.8, 9, 88.19, etc.). The association with 'yajamāna' at VIII.58.1 would indicate that the relationship has grown out of the functions at the sacrificial rite.

It should be noted in this connection that the word 'kṣatriya' is used in the general sense of ruler over a certain region and not in the sense of a caste as such. (cf. IV.12.3, 42.1; V.69.1; X.109.3). For the same reason, the gods are referred to as 'kṣatriyas' at VII.64.2; VIII.25.8 (*mitrāvaruṇā*); VIII.67.1 (*ādityas*) and X.66.8. It is to be noted that, when the classes as such came to be distinguished, the term 'rājanya' came to be employed (X.90.12). The word 'rājanya' is not used elsewhere in the Ṛgveda, though the word 'rājan' is used in contradistinction to 'brahman' at I.108.7 (*yad brahmaṇi rājani vā*), indicating that the class-distinction was not still prominent in the days of the Ṛgveda.

It appears that the reference to one of the brothers being the ruler and another officiating at the rite (X.98) can be best explained by assuming that one could take up a profession according to one's choice and aptitude. It is true that we see the phenomenon of the priestly work being carried by family tradition but that is no sure or safe ground for presuming the establishment of caste distinction. In fact, it can be said that as long as the sacrifice was not well-developed, the class-distinction did not become so rigid. It is therefore we find that the sacrifice, which gave rise to these classes had fostered healthy relations between the classes during the early period of its development, when both of them were conscious of evolving it as a healthy social institution. It is during this period that mutual help characterized their work as it becomes evident from the way in which they pray to the gods for prosperity (vide Chapter VIII).

Varying views have been held regarding the origin and the growth of the class of the priests. It appears that they have been based on the general idea about sacrifice that came to be held. Thus Prof. Macdonell, who believed the sacrifice to be saturated with magic, observes³ "Even in the period of the Ṛgveda, there already existed a priestly class, qualified by special knowledge and magical qualities to act for others in difficult and dangerous intercourse of men with gods and spirits."

3. ERE Vol. XII p. 610; also ERE X pp. 311-13; ABI, pp. 17-22 RVL pp. 153-58 and 341-42 RPV pp. 253; 291-99.

It should, however, be noted that the class of priests was not a class of magicians as Macdonell has surmised for the obvious reason that the R̥gvedic sacrifice was not magical in character.⁴ The same thing is indicated by the discussion above (Chapter III), regarding the way, in which they have evolved the idea of divinity and their mode of approach to them. Dr. Deshmukh has discussed the point at length and arrived at the conclusion, "(p.157) since magic never prevailed among the I.E.s to a great extent, before, at any rate, the rise of religion in the form of belief in and worship of heavenly gods, there did not have to exist a separate class of hereditary magicians."

There is no evidence to say that right from the beginning, the class of the priests started to shape the sacrifice in a way favourable to their predominance because the class of the singer-priests was in a pretty mobile condition in the early stages. If the families of both the singers and patrons have developed, it is natural on account of the strong influence of heredity. But when the thinker poets, in collaboration with their liberal patrons began to develop the institution of sacrifice, the class of the priests began to develop and attain a form. Thus the evolution of the class of the priests is essentially based on the evolution of the idea and practice of sacrifice and it is from this point of view that the introduction of the different categories of priests has to be noted with interest.

There are a number of words conveying the idea of the people, who used to officiate at the sacrificial performances. The composers of the hymns, the singers at the rite and others helping in the carrying out of the sacrificial ritual are all considered as identical and terms like 'uśij' or 'jaritr̥' are employed in the general sense of the officiating priests. This would indicate that the same persons used to perform all these functions for a long time in the growth of the tradition of the sacrifice. Gradually, however, according to the rough specification of the duties, the persons came to be separately styled; but this process also does not appear to have become so well-defined as to indicate different teams working with their specialised duties in view.

In whichever stages this may have taken place, it is clear that the family tradition has come into existence at a pretty early stage of the R̥gvedic sacrifice. It is this family tradition that has apparently given impetus to the sacrifices on the one hand and the composition of the hymns on the other.

The phenomenon of hymns in honour of Agni, Indra, Viśvedevas, etc., composed systematically in different families and later on also

4. Vide Chapters X and XIV below.

arranged accordingly can only indicate the eagerness to maintain certain traditions uniformly in all these families:

Total	Family	Agni	Indra	Viśvedevā	Other divinities specially
43	Gr̥tsamada	10	12	5	Brahmaṇaspati 4.
62	Viśvāmitra	29	23	5
58	Vāmadeva	15	17	1	R̥bhuv 5.
87	Atri	28	12	11	Maruts 10; Mitrāvaruṇā 11;
75	Bharadvāja	16	30	7	Aśvins 6;
104	Vasiṣṭha	17	16	17	Pūṣan 6.
					Mitrāvaruṇā 6; Aśvins 8; Uṣas 7;
					Varuṇa 4; Indrā-varuṇa 4.
87	Kaṇva	7	34	26	Soma 8; Aśvins 8; Maruts 4.
19	Bhṛgu	1	2	1	Soma 12; Maruts 2.
92	Angīrasas	11	28	...	Soma 23; R̥bhuv 2;
					Aśvins 3.

From the tabular statement above, it will be observed that besides the general worship of Agni, Indra and the Viśvedevas, some families devoted special attention to certain individual divinities. Thus Maruts and Mitrāvaruṇā appear to be specially worshipped in the Atri family. Mitrāvaruṇā worship similarly appears to be promoted by the Vasiṣṭha family. Pūṣan worship appears to be characteristic of the Bharadvāja family and R̥bhuv worship, of the Vāmadeva family. Even though we do not get any evidence to say anything regarding the origin of the worship of the individual divinities in the families, it is clear that the families have promoted the cause of sacrifice by the specialised forms of worship. Sacrifice has thus grown with the growth of divinities in some family traditions.

It is further interesting to note that even the forty-three hymns of the Gr̥tsmadās have been grouped in a separate maṇḍala, while both the Kaṇva and Angīrasas families with eighty-seven and ninety-two hymns respectively to their credit according to the tradition of the Anukramaṇī have not been assigned separate maṇḍalas. In the ninth maṇḍala, the authors of the family maṇḍalas are not so well represented. Thus Viśvāmitra has four,⁵ Atri has one,⁶ Bharadvāja has four,⁷ and Vasiṣṭha has one⁸. Kaṇvas, Bhṛgu and Angīrasas have seven, eleven and twenty-three hymns respectively to their credit. The maximum number of soma-hymns (thirty-five) however goes to the credit of the poet of the Kaśyapa family accord-

5. Nos. 1, 3, 70, 71.

6. No. 32.

7. Nos. 80, 81, 82, 98.

8. No. 90.

ing to the Anukramanī. It is not clear whether the authors mentioned by the Anukramanī originally belonged to one or the other of the ancient families referred to above. It may however be noted that the authorship of certain hymns of the tenth maṇḍala as referred to by the Anukramanī appears to be quite conjectural, being drawn from the prominent point of description in the hymns (note particularly X.83, 84, 90, 108, 121, 129, etc.). This will confirm the futility of believing in any unbroken tradition about the sacrificial performances as even the tradition about the authorship of the hymns has not continued upto the days of Kātyāyana. Thus for our purposes, the only relevant information would be what can be culled out from the hymns themselves.

ANĠIRASAS :⁹

Macdonell believes them to be mythical beings only, in the R̥gveda. But the R̥gvedic poets appear to be quite conscious of their real existence as they are referred to as ancient sages along with Atri, etc., at I.45.3 (atrvat....aṅgirasvad....śrudhī havam; also I.78.3) with some reputation in Agni worship. Along with the Bhṛguṣ they are referred to at VIII.43.13. Agni is referred to as 'aṅgirastama' at VIII.43.27. Their skill in composition is referred to at I.62.1; II.17.1; VIII.40.12. In the sacrifice, a poet of the Aṅgiras family is said to be singing a very sweet song at VI.11.3 (vepiṣṭho aṅgirasāṁ yaddha vipro madhucchando bhavāti rebha iṣṭau). Perhaps this gave rise to the name 'Madhucchandas', the reputed poet of RV. I, 1-10, who thus might have been an 'Aṅgirasa'. Their sacrificial service is referred to as a standard of comparison at III.31.19 (aṅgirasvannamasā saparyan); cf. also I.107.2; VI.49.11. They are associated with an efficacious form of ritual at I.71.3. Some sāma hymns are characteristically associated with them at X.78.5 (cf. Chapter XII under D).

Some persons belonging to the family are referred to in the hymns. The author of VIII.85 refers to his name as Kṛṣṇa (vv.3, 4). Similarly Viśvaka is referred to at VIII.86.1, 2 and Viṣṇāpu¹⁰ in v. 3. 'Hiraṇya-stūpa' is referred to as a well-known worshipper at X.149.5.

They appear to be on very cordial terms with the family of Jamadagni as indicated at IX.62.24, where the poet is referring to himself as Jamadagni, praying for soma for or from the Aṅgirasas at IX.62.9. Their Indra-worship is referred to at X.111.4.

Their mythical character referred to at X.62.5, where they are said to be the sons of Agni or when Indra is said to have opened the

9. VMH Vol. II, pp. 155-169; V.I. Vol. I, p. VMM pp. 142-143.

10. cf. V.I Vol. II, p. 315; RV I.116.23, 117.7, X.65.12.

stalls of cows for them (cf. I.132.4, IV.2.15, IX.86.23, X.108.10), would only indicate the ancient tradition with which the family was known and as such hallowed with some wonderful associations. At V.11.6, they are referred to as having found Agni indicating their connection with the fire-ritual at the early stages of the R̥gvedic sacrifice. Their association with the soma-ritual is indicated by their authorship of twenty-three soma hymns next in number only to Kaśyapas.

AGASTYA :¹¹

Along with other poets of old like Kaṇva, Priyamedha and Atri, Agastya styled as 'Mānya' is mentioned at VIII.5.26. The poets of X.60 refer to themselves as related to Agastya (v.6). For his mythical origin cf. VII.33.14. He is said to be the elder brother of Vasiṣṭha (VII.33.10) and appears to be well-known for his good compositions (I.165.14, 15, 184.4 etc.). In three hymns of the R̥gveda (I.165, 170, 171), Agastya is supposed to be attempting to propitiate Indra as he had incurred the latter's wrath (I.170.2, 3), on account of his worshipping Maruts without Indra. The hymns do not make the point clear; but the idea in propitiating Indra who is angry with Maruts (I.170.2, *kiṃ na indra jighāmsasi bhrātaro marutastava*), would appear to be connected with their worship. Whatever might be the nature of the offence of the poet, it would appear that different poets were trying to popularise the worship of different divinities as their special predilection. Agastya is credited with the authorship of an Āprī hymn, I.188.

ATRI :¹²

The family is credited with the authorship of the fifth maṇḍala.¹³ At V.2.6 (*vasāṃ rājānaṃ vasatīm janānām arātayo nidadhurmartyeṣu brahmāṇi atrerava taṃ sr̥jantu ninditāro nindyāso bhavantu ||*), the hymns of Atri are said to have released Agni and laid him down, indicating that he had rendered some significant contribution to Agni worship which had come into disrepute (possibly at the hands of the worshippers of the other deities or the non-sacrificers). The same thing is indicated by Atri being referred to as the standard of comparison for Agni-worship. (V.4.9, *agne atrivannamasā gr̥ṇāṇaḥ*; also V.7.8). It is further substantiated by the fact that the family has as many as twenty-eight Agni hymns to their credit (cf. the tabular statement above). This worship has led them to prosperity as indicated at V.15.5. They have also furthered the soma ritual as indicated at V.40.8, in which respect they are said to be incomparable (V.40.9, *nahi anye aśaknuvan*). Atri is mentioned along

11. V.I. pp. 6-7; Ved. Stu. 2, 138, 143.

12. VMH Vol. III, p. 310; V.I. Vol. I, p. 17; VMM, 145.

13. cf. especially V.22.4, 39.5, 67.5.

with Priyamedha and Upastuta at V.25.5; with Kaṇva at I.118.7; with Gotama at I.183.5 and with Kaksivats at X.143.1. Atris appear to have specially sponsored the worship of Maruts, Aśvins and Mitra-varuṇā (vide tabular statement above). A number of persons belonging to the family have been individually mentioned. Apālā at VIII.91.7; Evayāmarut at V.87.1; Gaviṣṭhira at V.1.12 and X.150.5 Gauravīti at V.29.11; Tryaruṇa at V.27.13; Dyumna at V.23.1; Paura at V.74.4; Babhru at V.30.14; Rātaḥavya at V.66.3; Vavri at V.19.1; Viśvasāman at V.22.1; (For Śyāvāśva see below); Saṁvaraṇa at V.33.10; Sasa at V.20.4; and Satyaśravas at V.79.3.

ATHARVAN :¹⁴

Like Aṅgirasas, Atharvan also appears to be a very old family,¹⁵ and as such is associated with some powers of a superhuman character at X.87.12, where they are said to be possessed of the power of burning, cf. also X.120.8, 9. Some characteristic hymn of his composition is referred to at I.80.16. The founder of the family is said to be the first to lay down the path of sacrifice (I.83.5, yajñairatharvā prathamah pathastate; X.92.10, yajñairatharvā prathamō vi dhārayat).¹⁶ Atharvan is credited with the churning of the fire at VI.16.13; cf. also X.21.5. Dadhyac,¹⁷ his son is also said to be continuing the tradition of Agni worship at VI.16.14 and hence they have become the standard of comparison as far as churning of fire is concerned (VI.15.17, atharvavadagnim manthanti vedhasah). As Prof. Macdonell notes, some persons of the family, who have received gifts are referred to at VI.47.24. The Atharvans appear to have a specific way of mixing milk with soma-juice as referred to at IX.11.2, (abhi te madhunā payo'tharvāṇo aśīśrayuḥ). The poet of X.120 refers to himself as the great Atharvan (v.9).

APNAVĀNA :¹⁸

See under Bhṛguś.

UPASTUTA :¹⁹

He is mentioned along with the wellknown sacrificing priests like Kaṇvas, Atri, etc. at I.36.10, VIII.5.25,26. As Sobhari belonging to Kaṇva family is referring to them in plural at VIII.103.8, it appears to be a group of people associated in worship with the Kaṇva family.

14. VMH Vol. II, pp. 174; VMM 141; V.I. Vol. I, pp. 17-18.

15. They are included among the Pitṛs along with Aṅgirasas, Navagvas and Bhṛguś at X.14.6.

16. cf. also Bhṛguś below.

17. cf. I.111.12; I.84.13 and under Navagvas below.

18. V.I. Vol. I, p. 26.

19. V.I. Vol. I, p. 97.

UŚANAS :²⁰

Like the ancient sages Aṅgirasas and Bhṛguṣ, he is credited with the establishment of fire for the purposes of sacrifice at VIII.23.17. The author of IV.16 belonging to the Vāmadeva family refers to his composition as being like that of Uśanas (IV.16.2), indicating the traditional reputation of the poet in the composition of hymns.

AUŚIJA :²¹

Kakṣivān the famous author of a number of hymns (I.116-126) is referred to as an Auśija at I.18.1. But their separate individuality is referred to at I.112.11, indicating that possibly Auśija was the name of an ancient family like Uśanas.²² Auśija family was known for the soma ritual, at which Auśija is said to have drunk the soma-juice (cf. I.19.9, made somasya auśijo huvanyati |). Ṛjīśvā perhaps is another member of the family (X.99.11, auśijo rjīśvā), associated with the Indra-worship.

KAKṢIVĀN :²³

He is referred to as Auśija at I.18.1. He is referred to along with Vyaśva as the worshipper of Aśvins at I.116.7, 117.6, VIII.9.10 and along with Aṅgirasas at I.51.3. He is said to be a Pajriya at I.116.7 (see Pajra below) and Pajras are said to be Kakṣivantaḥ at I.126.4. He celebrates the receipt of the gift from Svanaya Bhāvya²⁴ in I.126.

KAṆVAS :²⁵

As it has been observed above, the Kaṇva family has been ascribed the authorship of nearly ninety hymns in different maṇḍalas. The family is not represented in the tenth maṇḍala. Out of the hymns they have composed, nearly thirty-five are in honour of Indra, indicating their special contribution to Indra-worship. It may be noted that none of the other families has got so many Indra hymns to its credit. The chief of the family is referred to at I.48.4 (kaṇva eṣāṁ kaṇvatamaḥ) and emulated as an ideal at VIII.6.11 and 52.8. The family is mentioned along with Atri and others at V.25.5. They are referred to as having pressed out soma-juice at I.44.8 (suta-somāsaḥ). It appears that they were keen sacrificers some time as indicated at VIII.2.22. They also appear to have been considered as good poets as their hymns are characteristically mentioned at VIII.2.43, 7.19; 32.1. They appear to have fallen in estimate afterwards for some reason or other²⁶ and hence come to be considered

20. V.I. Vol. I, p. 103; he is referred to along with the Atharvan at I.83.5.

21. V.I. Vol. I, p. 130.

22. For some miraculous association, cf. VI.4.6.

23. Brhad. IV.11; V.I. Vol. I, p. 131.

24. Vide Chapter VIII.

25. V.I. Vol. I, p. 134.

26. VMH. Vol. III, 285.

as an unimportant family. The same fact, it may be noted, is also indicated by their non-representation in the tenth maṇḍala which is considered to be the latest of the maṇḍalas. But in their time, they came to be considered as a great family as even the Bhṛgus are compared with them (VIII.3.16, *kaṇvā iva bhṛgavaḥ*). As keen devotees of Indra, they very often invoke the god to leave others and go to them.²⁷ It is as a result of this intimacy that they have referred to Indra as the instrument of sacrifice²⁸ at VIII.6.3 and as being increased by their sacrifices at VIII.6.21. They have eight Aśvin hymns to their credit and hence appear to have taken to Aśvin worship keenly (cf. VIII.8.3, 4, 8, for 'savana' to Aśvins).

It appears that the Kaṇvas were not on friendly terms with the Pajras as indicated at VIII.4.17,²⁹ where the poet of Kaṇva family expresses his reluctance to sing a sāmān hymn of the Pajra family (though it may have been very efficacious).

It appears that as indicated in the case of the Āprī hymns, hymns of some sacrificial efficacy were borrowed by a family from the other occasionally. The sāmān hymn of the Pajra family appears to be one such hymn. But the categorical statement of the poet of VIII.4 that he would not recite it, would indicate that priestly rivalries were developing.³⁰

A few persons belonging to the family have been mentioned. (1) Nārṣada Kaṇva is referred to as a protege of the Aśvins at I.117.8.³¹ (2) Medhātithi is credited with the authorship of an Āprī hymn (I.13). He is referred to at VIII.8.20 and appears to be identical with Medhyātithi.³² Medhyātithi appears to be an older member of the family of the Kaṇvas, as his sacrificial fire is referred to by another poet of the family at I.36.10, 11, 17. His ability as a composer is emphasized at VIII.1.30, 2.40. His soma-juice is referred to at IX.43.3. He is said to be protected by Indra at VIII.33.4 and 49.9. (3) Nīpātithi is referred to along with Medhyātithi at VIII.49.9, 51.1. and is also possibly a member of the Kaṇva family. According to Anuk, he is the author of VIII.34. (4) Praskaṇva³³ is said to have been helped by Agni at I.44.6. He appears to be older than Medhyātithi as the latter refers to the help already received by Praskaṇva earlier (cf. VIII.3.9). He is also referred to in connection with Indra worship at I.45.3, VIII.51.2, 54.8. (5) Vatsa, another rather self-

27. cf. VIII.4.2, 5.13, 32.22, 33.14, 49.7, 65.1, 66.12, 82.1.

28. discussed above in this Chapter.

29. 'na tasya vemyaraṇam hi tadvaso stuṣe pajrāya sāmne' cf. Chapter II, p. 33.

30. cf. VMH. Vol. I, on II.18.3; cf. also V.2.6 (quoted above) where the 'ninditārah' (slanderers) of Atris are referred to.

31. At X.31.11 he is merely said to be called a Kaṇva. 'Uta Kaṇvaṁ nṛṣadaḥ putramāhu'.

32. V.I. Vol. II, p. 178.

33. V.I. Vol. II, p. 43.

conscious member of the Kaṇva family has been referred to as connected with the worship of Agni, Aśvins and Indra. At VIII.6.1 and 8.8, he is said to be increasing Indra by his hymns. At VIII.9.1, he invokes help from Aśvins. At VIII.11.7, the poet indicates his hold over the Agni worship (ā te vatso mano yamat |). (6) Sobhari³⁴ is credited with the authorship of VIII.19.22 and VIII.103. He appears to have been considered to be an important member of the Kaṇva family and hence some of his descendents refer to themselves as 'Sobharis', (cf. VIII.19.32;20.8) and the first person of that name as the 'pītā sobhari' at VIII.22.15. He is mentioned along with Kaṇva, Atri and Priyamedha at VIII.5.26. Sobharis appear to have specialised in the worship of Maruts and through them of Indra. Thus Maruts are referred to as 'sobhariyavaḥ' at VIII.20.2

KAŚYAPA :³⁵

It may be noted that according to the Anuk, the largest number of soma hymns in the ninth maṇḍala, ascribed to a single family, are claimed by Kaśyapas. They therefore appear to have specialised in the soma-ritual almost exclusively unlike others. A poet who refers to himself as Bhūtāmsa (X.106.11, bhūtāmsō aśvinoḥ kāmama-prāḥ) is associated with Aśvin worship, which also was a soma-ritual essentially.

KUŚIKA :³⁶

See under Viśvāmitra.

GAYA :

He is the son of Pṛti and author of X.63. and 64³⁷ referring to himself at X.63.17, 64.17, as a singer who has satisfied the divinities by his hymns (X.64.16).

GR̥TSAMADA :³⁸

Gr̥tsamadas are credited with the authorship of the second maṇḍala. They appear to have specialised in the Br̥haspati or Brahmanaspati worship.³⁹ They are said to be skilled in the composition of hymns (II.19.8, 39.8). Their hymn to Sarasvatī is referred to at II.41.17, 18. As Śunahotras, their soma-juice is referred to at II.41.14 and II.18.6. No individual member nor the head of the family is referred to as we find in the case of the other families. This may be due to the very ancient character of the family. It may

34. V.I. Vol. II, p. 474.

35. V.I. Vol. I, p. 145.

36. V.I. Vol. I, pp. 173-4.

37. which appear to be composed with a set purpose and pattern; both the hymns are in honour of the Viśvedevas and contain seventeen stanzas each.

38. V.I. Vol. I, pp. 228-9; VMH Vol. III, 287.

39. Vide tabular statement above.

be noted that the family has got a separate Āprī hymn (II.3) of their own, indicating some strong family ritual associations.

GOTAMA :⁴⁰

Excepting at two places (I.116.9, 183.5), where Gotama is referred to as a protege of the Aśvins, the word used in singular or in plural, is associated with the composition of some hymns. Thus hymns are said to be composed by them (I.61.6, 63.9). Hymns belonging to them (gotamāso girah) are referred to at I.78.1; IV.32.9. Vāmadeva, the author of IV.4 refers to Gotama as his father (v.11, tanmā piturgotamādanviyāya |), from whom he has inherited, tradition of some efficacious compositions (vacobhiḥ). The same is indicated also by Nodhas, also a Gotama, composing a fresh hymn for Indra (I.62.13, navyamatakṣad brahma |). The Gotamas are referred to as composers of hymns at I.88.4 and as bearers of hymns at IV.32.12 (stomavāhasaḥ). They are referred to as 'Rahūgaṇa'⁴¹ at I.78.5, where too their hymns to Agni specifically have been referred to.

JAMADAGNI :⁴²

Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni are jointly the authors of X.167 and are referred to in v.4 of the hymn. In the R̥gveda, he does not appear to be a rival of Vasiṣṭha as he is referred to in a hymn of the Vasiṣṭha maṇḍala as an ideal poet. At VII.96.3 (gr̥ṇānā jamadagnivat stuvānā ca vasiṣṭhavat |), Jamadagni appears to be considered to be as great a singer poet as Vasiṣṭha and his contribution as such is referred to at IX.97.51 (ārṣeyaṁ jamadagnivat). His interest in soma-rites is indicated at IX.62.24; 65.25. He is associated with the worship of Mitrāvaruṇā (III.62.18) and Aśvinā (VIII.181.8) as well. For his relation with the Bhrgus and the Aṅgirasas, refer to notes under the words.

DAŚAGVA :⁴³

He is said to be the best of the Aṅgirasas at X.62.6 (daśagvo aṅgirstamaḥ). The Daśagvas are said to have originated the sacrifice at II.34.12 (te daśagvāḥ prathamā yajñamūhire |). They are said to have pressed out the soma-juice at V.29.12. They have been closely associated with the Navagvas. The names very possibly indicate that they initiated some longer ritualistic performances like the 'sahasrasāva' (vide Chapter VI). Perhaps the names indicate the groups of nine or ten persons, which initiated a particular type of ritual as would be indicated by the horses of Indra being referred

40. V.I. Vol. I, p. 234; cf. 'Vāmadevas' below.

41. V.I. Vol. II, p. 209.

42. V.I. Vol. I, p. 276.

43. V.I. Vol. I, p. 341; VMM 144, 170.

to as ten-fold or hundredfold, etc., at VIII.1.9 (ye te santi daśagvinah śatino ye sahasriṇaḥ...āśvāsaḥ)⁴⁴

DĪRGHA-TAMAS :⁴⁵

He is referred to as 'Aucathya' at I.158.1, 4 and as a 'Māmateya' at I.158.6. At VIII.9.10, he appears as a worshipper of Aśvins along with Kakṣivān and Vyaśva. At I.147.3 and IV.4.13, Māmateya, who is blind is referred to as protected by Agni.⁴⁶ His association with sacrificial performances is indicated at I.152.6. He is credited with the authorship of an Āpri hymn I.142.

DURMITRA :⁴⁷

He is referred to as a poet who has praised Indra in a characteristic way at X.105.11. He appears to be different from Sumitra related with the family of Vadhryaśva (vide Chapter VIII), though X.105.11 would give an impression about their being identical (vide Sumitra below p. 159).

NABHĀKA AND NĀBHĀKA :

A descendant of Nabhāka is referring to him at VIII.40.4, 5, as known for his good compositions. The hymns of Nābhāka are also similarly referred to at VIII.41.2. According to Anuk, he is a Kāṇva but Ludwig⁴⁸ believes him to be an Āṅgīrasa.⁴⁹

NAVAGVAS :⁵⁰

Like Daśagvas, they are either intimately connected with the Āṅgīrasa family or are a group of that family itself. (cf. X.108.8, aṅgīraso navagvāḥ). Along with Daśagvas they are referred to as Āṅgīrasas at X.62.6. They are said to be soma-pressers at V.29.12. They are referred to as ancient members of the family by a poet of the Bharadvāja family (VI.22.1, naḥ pūrve pitaro navagvāḥ). At X.14.6, they are ranked along with Āṅgīrasas, Atharvans and Bhṛguś as Pitṛs, who deserve worship with soma. Their ancient character, connection with Āṅgīrasas and Agni worship makes possible their reference as 'flames of fire' at VI.6.3 (agne bhāmāsaḥ śucayaścaranti...divyāḥ navagvāḥ |). At X.61.10, (ṛtaṁ vadanta ṛtayuktimagman), their connection with a rite and appropriate recitals thereat is referred to. A soma ritual lasting for ten months is associated with them at V.45.7.⁵¹ Dadhyaṇ is mentioned as belonging to the Navagva group

44. Vide Navagvas below.

45. V.I. Vol. I, p. 367; 'māmateya' op. cit. Vol. II, p. 154. and Gledner Vol. II, p. 202 F.N.

46. a whole verse 'ye pāyavo debhuḥ' is repeated in two hymns (I.147.3) by Dīrghamas and IV.4.13 by Vāmadeva Gotama.

47. V.I. Vol. II, p. 457.

48. cf. 3, 107.

49. V.I. Vol. I, pp. 441-442.

50. V.I. Vol. I, p. 437; VMM. 144, 170.

and his significant soma-ritual is referred to at IX.108.4a (yenā navagvo dadhyānapornute).⁵² It appears to be the same as referred to at I.116.12 (dadhyā ha yanmadhvātharvaṇo vāmaśvasya śīrṣṇā prayaḍimuvāca ||), who has joined the Navagva group. Their service to Indra is distinguished from that rendered by the Daśagvas at I.62.4.

NABHĀNEDIṢṬHA (MĀNAVA) :⁵³

Āṅgirasas are praised to favour the author of the hymn at X.62.1-4. He is referred to as Nābhānediṣṭha at X.61.18, the epithet perhaps being explained by the fact that as a keen sacrificer he was always nearest the altar (nābhi, cf. Chap. IV for epithets of altar).

PAJRA :

The name of the family appears to be of a derivative significance similar to that of the Vasiṣṭha family, being derived from the root 'paj' (from which pājas is derived). With this derivative sense in view, the word appears to be used at I.158.3, VIII.4.17,⁵⁴ VIII.6.47 and X.106.7. The family seems to have been known for their Indra and Aśvinā worship. At I.117.10, they are said to be invoking Aśvins and the Aśvins are compared with them in an obscure simile at X.106.7. Indra is referred to as 'pajra' at VIII.63.12 and he is said to be firm among the pajras like a door-post at I.51.14. Kakṣivān is said to be a 'pajriya' at I.116.7 and at I.126.4, 5, kakṣivantaḥ are referred to along with 'pajras'. The gift of Śrutaratha and Priyaratha to Pajra family is referred to at I.122.7, 8. For their relation with the Kaṇvas, see under Kaṇvas above.

PĀYU :⁵⁵

He is mentioned at VI.47.24 as receiving a gift from Prastoka, indicating his priestly service.

PUṢṬIGU⁵⁶ AND ŚRUṢṬIGU :⁵⁷

They are mentioned along with Medhyātithi and Nipātithi at VIII.51.1, as connected with soma performance and may be the names of priests,⁵⁸ so called because of the possession of cows received from the patrons. It is not improbable however that they are the rich patrons as the names may indicate.

51. Vide Chapter VI.

52. V.I. Vol. I, p. 442.

53. V.I. Vol. I, p. 466; Ved. Stu. I.97.98; and 'Śrutaratha' in Chapter VIII.

54. for their sāma, see above.

55. V.I. Vol. I, p. 518.

56. V.I. Vol. II, p. 10.

57. V.I. Vol. II, p. 403.

58. Similarly 'Satyagu' (X.47.6) may also be a priest. V.I. Vol. II. p. 424.

PRIYAMEDHA :⁵⁹

It is the name of an individual priest as well as of the family, specialised in Indra and Aśvinā worship. They are mentioned along with Kaṇvas and Atris as receiving help from Aśvins at VIII.5.25, 26; with Kaṇvas and Bhṛguś at VIII.3.16 and in an invocation to Indra at I.45.3. At VIII.2.37 and 69.8, the members of the family are exhorted to worship Indra. They are referred to as worshipping Indra at X.73.11 and horses of Indra at VIII.6.45. Along with Kaṇvas, they are referred to as receiving magnificent gift from Kurūṅga⁶⁰ at VIII.4.20. Their association with sacrificial performances is said to be very ancient at VIII.69.18 (anu prātnasyaukaśaḥ priyamedhāśa eṣāṁ pūrvāmanu prayatiṁ vṛktabarhiṣo hitaprayasa āśata |), where ancient tradition of cutting grass and arranging sacrificial offering is referred to.

BABHRU :⁶¹

He is said to be offering a soma-sacrifice for the king R̥ṇamcaya at V.30.11 and receiving a sumptuous gift for the same.⁶²

BRHADUKTHA :⁶³

He appears to have performed a soma sacrifice for his patron Śvāitreyā⁶⁴ at V.19.3 and received the gift of a necklace. He is credited with the authorship of X.54-56 and is said to belong to Vāmadeva family according to Anuk. He refers to his hymn for Indra as a powerful one (X.54.6). His help to his family is referred to at X.56.7.

BHARADVĀJA :⁶⁵

Bharadvāja family is credited with the authorship of the sixth maṇḍala, four hymns from the ninth maṇḍala and three hymns in the tenth maṇḍala (Nos. 87, 152, 155). The family has the credit of composing the maximum number of Indra hymns (thirty) in the family group and next only to Kaṇvas who claim about thirty-five hymns in the first and the eighth maṇḍalas taken together. The head of the family is apparently referred to at VI.65.6 (bharadvāja-vadvidhate maghoni....) and VI.31.4, where Indra is said to have given gifts to the praising Bharadvāja. A descendant of the family is referring to the secret of sacrifice known to the Bharadvāja family (X.181.2 avindante atihitaṁ yadāsid yajñasya dhāma paramaṁ guhā yat). Bharadvāja is referred to as a hotṛ. He is mentioned along with Atri, Kaṇva and Vasiṣṭha at X.150.5. The association

59. V.I. Vol. II, p. 52.

60. Vide Chapter VIII and XI.

61. V.I. Vol. II, p. 60.

62. Vide Chapters VIII under Rūśamas and XI.

63. V.I. Vol. II, p. 71.

64. Vide Chapter VIII.

65. V.I. Vol. II, pp. 97-98.

of Bharadvāja family with Aśvins is referred to at I.112.13, 116.18; VI.63.10. Agni-worship and Agni's gifts are referred to at I.59.7; VI.10.6, 15.3, 16.5, 48.7; X.181.2. They are said to have received a gift of Sārñjaya at VI.47.25.⁶⁶

BHŪTĀMŚA :

See under Kaśyapa.

BHṚGU :⁶⁷

In a number of passages, the connection of the Bhṛgus with Agni and Mātariśvan is referred to and it has led Prof. Macdonell to believe that 'Bhṛgu' as a historical family name occurs only at four places in the R̥gveda (VII.18.6; VIII.3.9, 6.18 and 102.4). The family of Bhṛgus appears to be a very ancient family, older than the Kaṇvas, who are compared with them at VIII.3.16. They are referred to as ideal priests along with Aṅgīrasas and Atharvans at VIII.43.13 and X.14.6. Atharvan is perhaps older than Bhṛgu as indicated at I.83.5 and X.92.10 (see Atharvan above). Atharvan is also connected with fire like the Bhṛgus and it appears to indicate that the discovery of fire has given great impetus to the idea of divine worship. It is Bhṛgus who appear to have made Agni worship more popular so that they are referred to as having given Agni to men (I.58.6). The idea is also expressed by saying that Matarāśvan has brought Agni for the Bhṛgus (I.60.1; III.5.10; X.46.9). They are said to have found the fire skilfully (II.4.2; X.46.1) or laid down the fire (II.4.2; VI.15.2) or impelled the fire (I.143.4). Agni is also referred to as a gift of Bhṛgus to men (III.2.4) and on account of such close association, comes to be referred to as 'Bhṛgavāṇa' at I.71.4, IV.7.4. The skill of the Bhṛgus in the composition of hymns is referred to at IV.16.20 and X.39.14. They are referred to as initiating Agni-worship by the kindling of fire and the composition of hymns (X.122.5, tvām stomebhirbhṛgavo virurucuḥ). They are said to have praised Indra⁶⁸ (VIII.6.18) and received Indra's help to win over the prizes (VIII.3.9). But they appear to have suffered a heavy blow at the hands of Indra, when they officiated for the enemies of Sudās—may be Druhyus,⁶⁹ —who are said to have perished along with them (VII.18.6, śruṣṭim cakrurbhṛgavo druhyavaśca).

Ghoṣa⁷⁰ may have belonged to the family of Bhṛgus as he is referred to as 'bhṛgavāṇa' at I.120.5 in connection with Agni-worship.

From the way in which Apnavāna is referred to at IV.7.1

66. Vide Chapter VIII, under 'Sṛñjayas'.

67. V.I. Vol. II, p. 109; VMM 51; VMH Vol. II, 169-73.

68. Bhṛgus are credited with the authorship of eleven soma hymns in the ninth maṇḍala.

69. Vide Chapter VIII.

70. V.I. Vol. I, p. 251.

(yamapnavāno bhr̥gavo virurucuḥ), it would appear that he belonged to the Bhr̥gu family. This is further supported by VIII.102.4, where Agni is said to be invoked in the same manner as was done by Aurva Bhr̥gu and Apnavāna (aurvabhrguvaccucimapnavānavadā huve....agniṁ). According to Anuk, the author of VIII.102, is a person of the Bhr̥gu family and he would naturally be supposed to refer to two of his illustrious ancestors, known for their Agni worship.

According to Anuk, Jamadagni, the author of an Āpri hymn X.110, was a member of the Bhr̥gu family. He is closely associated with Aṅgirasas (vide under Aṅgirasas above). But we do not get any clear evidence from the hymns of the Ṛgveda to say whether the families of Bhr̥gus and Aṅgirasas were on intimate terms, though both have played a significant part in the growth of the sacrifice.

VAŚA :⁷¹

At I.112.10, 116.21; VIII.8.20 and X.40.7, he is said to be protected by Aśvins. At VIII.24.14 he is said to be praying to Indra and at VIII.50.9 is referred to as protected by Indra. At VIII.46.21, 33, he is said to have received magnificent gifts from Pṛthuvrasas Kānita.⁷²

VASIṢṬHA :⁷³

Vasiṣṭha and his family are credited with the authorship of the seventh maṇḍala and a few hymns in the ninth and the tenth maṇḍalas. The reference in singular does not necessarily refer to the head of the family (e.g. VII.9.6, 22.3, 42.6, 73.3 etc.). At some places however, the head of the family is obviously referred to (e.g. VII.18.4, 21; 33.10, 11). VII.33 indicates the halo created round the name of the chief of the family even in those ancient days. VII.18 is obviously descriptive of a real event, indicating the nature of help rendered by the Vasiṣṭha to Sudās against pretty heavy odds (VII.83.8a, dāsarājñe pariyattāya viśvataḥ; VII.33.6). The reference to Parāśara and Śatayātu of his family who have also helped him in the Indra-worship (VII.18.21) indicates how the chief priest used to enlist the services of other members of his family in the priestly service, undertaken by him.

The majority of the references to the family are indicative of their skill in poetic compositions addressed to various divinities (cf. VII.18.4, 23.6, 26.5, 70.6, 73.6, 76.6, 80.1, 90.7). They appear to be conscious of the service they were rendering to the divinities

71. V.I. Vol. II, p. 273.

72. Vide Chapter VIII.

73. V.I. Vol. II, pp. 274-77.

and hence the reference to their increasing the divinities (VII.12.3, 77.6).

Saraswatī worship was perhaps initiated by Vasiṣṭha in collaboration with Jamadagni as indicated at VII.96.3 (gr̥nānā jamadagnivat stuvānā ca vasiṣṭhavat). The reference may perhaps be to the two independent hymns in honour of the divinity by Vasiṣṭha (VII. 95, 96). He is associated in Agni worship as indicated at VII.7.7, 8.7, 9.6, 42.6; X.122.8. As related with Mitra and Varuṇa (vide VII.33), the family of Vasiṣṭha has naturally played its part in the furtherance of the Mitrāvaruṇā worship with six independent hymns. Their worship of a large variety of deities indicates the balance they had maintained in the general scheme of the sacrifice and it is this fact which has made their contribution to the cause of sacrifice quite significant.

The reverence with which the later members of the family looked upon the founder of the family can be seen in a proud reference at X.66.14 (vasiṣṭhāsaḥ pitṛvad vācamakrata). In a later passage (X.150.5), Vasiṣṭha is referred to as a 'purohita' in his invocation to Agni and at X.181.1, Vasiṣṭha is credited with the composition of the famous 'rathantara' sāman.⁷⁴ His protestation against the allegation of the use of the 'yātu' by him at VII.104.15-16 and his emphasis on the truth at VII.104.12 indicates that he was in favour of a system of sacrifice that was completely free from blemish. It may also indicate that both the tendencies of magic and religion prevailed at places and the emphasis by Vasiṣṭha on the sacrifice to all the divinities and his emphatic denunciation of the black magic appears to have paved the way for the spread of the purer practice of sacrifice and through it a more refined view of religion.

Excepting Parāśara and Śatayātu (VII.18.21), no other members⁷⁵ of the family have been individually referred to in the hymns of the R̥gveda.

VIMADA :⁷⁶

It appears to be a later family of the poets, which seeks to distinguish its composition by a play on their name as indicated at X.21.1-8; 24.1-3; (vi vo made). At X.20.10, Vimada is said to have composed a hymn in honour of Agni. At X.23.7 his friendship with Indra is referred to. At X.23.6, a striking hymn is said to have been composed by the members of the Vimada family (stomaṁ ta indra vimadā ajījanan apūrvyaṁ...). At X.24.4 Aśvins are said to have been adored by Vimada. In the light of this reference to his connection with Aśvins, this Vimada need not be different from the

74. cf. Chapter II, p. 33.

75. For Śakti cf. V.I. Vol. II, p. 348; RV VII.32.26, (Sāy).

76. V.I Vol. II, p. 303.

Vimada referred to at I.51.3, 112.9; X.39.7, 65.12,⁷⁷ as Macdonell imagines.⁷⁸

VIRŪPA :⁷⁹

He appears to be a priest of good reputation, known to Praskarṇya as the latter mentions him along with Atri, Aṅgirasas, etc., known for the efficacy of their invocations. He is said to be offering a good hymn to Agni at VIII.75.6.

VIŚVAMANAS :⁸⁰

His hymn to Agni is referred to at VIII.23.2 and to Indra at VIII.24.7. At VIII.24.23 and 26.11, he is referred to as a son of Vyaśva (see below).

VIŚVĀMITRA :⁸¹

Viśvāmitra and his family are ascribed the entire collection of hymns from the third maṇḍala and also a few hymns in the ninth and the tenth maṇḍalas. It may be noted that excepting in III.33 and 53, the reference is always to the family in plural. At III.33.5, the poet is pointedly referring to himself as the son of Kuśika (br̥hatī manīṣā avasyuravhe kuśikasya sūnuḥ). The self consciousness discernible here is more perceptibly seen at III.53.9 (viśvāmitro yadavahat sudāsamapriyāyata kuśikebhirindrah), where he is emphasizing the fact of Indra becoming favourable to Sudās on account of his help. In a general way, he emphatically states that it was his hymn that was protecting the Bharata clan. (III.53.12, viśvāmitrasya rakṣati brahmedaṁ bhārataṁ janam). These remarks indicate that they are made by a highly self-conscious priest with his characteristic achievement in view. Viśvāmitra is very proud of his being the son of Kuśika (vide III.33.5 above) and the references to the family of 'Kuśikas' are pretty frequent (cf. III.26.1, 29.15, 30.20 etc.). This would indicate that the family has an older tradition of priestly service. If Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra were contemporaries, the priestly tradition for Viśvāmitra will have to be considered as a longer one.

It appears that the Kuśika family was known for brilliant compositions (III.29.15, dyumnavad brahma kuśikāsa erire. cf. also III.53.13). Soma-sacrifice and the consequent drinking of soma-juice are also referred to at III.53.10. But it seems that the regime of Viśvāmitra has become so striking in the history of priestly

77. as a protege of Aśvins.

78. V.I. Vol. II, p. 304.

79. V.I. Vol. II, p. 304.

80. V.I. Vol. II, p. 309.

81. V.I. Vol. II, pp. 301-12.

82. On 'sasarpārī'—cf. V.I. Vol. II, p. 441; Vel. B.U.J. 1935 p. 41 fn.

service that some later poets have started referring to the family as that of the Viśvāmitra (vide III.1.21, 18.4; X.89.17).

For the association of Viśvāmitra with Jamadagni, cf. X.167.4 (see above) and III.53.15-16, where Jamadagni is said to have given 'sasarpārī' to him.⁸²

It may be noted that no member of the family has been referred to in the hymns of the R̥gveda.

VYAŚVA :⁸³

He is referred to as a protege of the Aśvins at I.112.15. The family of Vyaśva, to which Viśvamanas (see above) is said to have belonged is referred to at VIII.24.28. The founder of the family, who seems to have sponsored Aśvin worship is referred to along with other Aśvin worshippers, Pṛthī,⁸⁴ Kakṣivān etc., at VIII.9.10 and as an ideal to be emulated at VIII.26.9. Though his compositions are not known, the R̥gvedic poets refer to them. Thus the hymns to Agni are referred to at VIII.23.23 (ābhīrvidhemāgnaye jyeṣṭhābhīr-vyaśvavat), hymn or hymns to Aśvins at VIII.26.9, to Indra at VIII.24.22 and to soma at IX.65.7.

ŚĀRYĀTA :⁸⁵

He is said to be a 'mānava' like Nābhāvedīṣṭha by Anuk, though not referred to as such in the R̥gveda. His priestly service is referred to at I.51.12 (śāryātasya prabhṛtā yeṣu mandase), where Indra is said to be delighted in his sacrificial food. His well-known soma-pressing is also referred to at III.51.7 (indra marutva iha pāhi somaṁ yathā śāryāte apibah sutasya).

ŚINJĀRA :⁸⁶

He is merely referred to as a protege of the Aśvins at X.40.7 and at VIII.5.25, he is mentioned along with poets like Atri, Kaṇva etc., who are well-known as poets and priests.

ŚYĀVĀŚVA :⁸⁷

He has a number of hymns to his credit according to Anuk. He is mentioned by name half a dozen times and from the epithet 'sunvataḥ', appears to be connected with soma-ritual prominently (cf. VIII.35.19-21,⁸⁸ 36.7, 38.8). He emulates his ancestor Atri in his poetic compositions (VIII.35.19, 20; 37.7) and sacrificial performances (VIII.35.21). His name is associated with various gods,

83. V.I. Vol. II, p. 336.

84. V.I. Vol. II, p. 16.

85. V.I. Vol. II, p. 375.

86. V.I. Vol. II, p. 378.

87. V.I. Vol. II, p. 400; V.H.I; S.B.E. 32 p. 359; Brhad V.49.

88. Where he is said to have offered the 'tiroahnya' soma.

Indrāgni (VIII.38.8), Savitr (V.81.5), Aśvins (VIII.35.19-21) and Maruts (V.52.1).

He praises his patron 'Taranta' at V.61.5 and refers to the gift of 'Rathaviti', to whom he is said to be attached on account of the soma-ritual (V.61.5) (vide Chapter VIII).

SAMVARAṆA :⁸⁹

Ascribed the authorship of V.33, the poet is referring to himself as having received gifts from Dhvanya at V.33 (vide Chapter VIII).

SATYAŚRAVAS :⁹⁰

At V.79.1, he is mentioned along with others in the Uṣas worship. In the two following stanzas as well he is referred to as 'vāyva'.

SUMITRA :⁹¹

He is different from Durmitra, who is alternately referred to as Sumitra at X.105.11. Sumitra and his family appear to be connected with Vadhryaśva and to have helped him in the Agni worship, sought to be promoted by him (cf. X.69.1, 7, 8). He is credited with the composition of an Āpri hymn (X.70).

STHŪRAYŪPA :

At VIII.23.24, the poet Viśvamanas is said to be worshipping Agni like Vyaśva (his ancestor) and Sthūrayūpa and as such the latter appears to have specialised in Agni ritual.

Thus it can be seen that the growth of the sacrifice was due, to a large extent, to the efforts of the various priests, who were also the poets of the hymns they were composing for the propitiation of the divinities. It is not quite clear as to what type of duties these singer poets were discharging in the sacrificial performances. If the duties would have been so clearly demarcated and the duties of different priests so rigidly fixed, we could have come across some references to that effect in the hymns themselves.

As all the priests were not poets and apparently they were not —the various priests referred to can be imagined to be professionals as Hillebrandt⁹² has done. He tries to see references to them in I.125.1-4 and IV.24.10.⁹³ The family tradition indicated above would show that a large number of people had apparently taken to sacri-

89. V.I. Vol. II, p. 413.

90. *op. cit.* p. 420.

91. V.I. Vol. II, p. 457.

92. VMH. Vol. I, p. 146; V.I. Vol. II, p. 77.

93. For interpretation about the sale of Indra cf. Velankar B.U.J. 1938 (p. 52 f.n.). cf. also VIII. 1.5 mahe ca na parā śulkāya deyaṁ, which can rightly be construed as an expression of devotion towards the divinity. cf. also RBV.

ficial performances, but we do not come across any references to specific duties being assigned and carried out by certain groups of persons, who could thus be designated as professionals. At II.20.3 (yaḥ śāmsantam yaḥ śāsamānamūti pacantam stuvantam ca praneṣat), Hillebrandt sees reference to well-marked duties⁹⁴ of different categories of priests and as such infers the Ṛgvedic ritual to be a 'developed ritual'. It should be noted however that the distinctive nature of the activities is not quite clear here.

The references to Dakṣiṇā (Chapter V) would also indicate that the idea of specific remuneration for the performance of certain duties connected with the sacrifice did not exist at the time. The gifts varied according to the ability of the patrons and were not dependent on the type of performance. In a strict sense therefore the priests could not be said to be professionals in the field of sacrifice.

The idea of professionalism is linked up with the developed form of ritual. If the latter is taken for granted, it would lead to the inference about the former. Hillebrandt had an idea of a developed form of ritual in his mind as it becomes clear by his attempt to explain some of the hymns in the light of the later ritual⁹⁵ and his view about the purchase of soma.⁹⁶ He is aware of the fact that it is not referred to in the Ṛgveda; but its wide prevalence in the later ritual has made him remark "the silence can be explained by the fact that the hymns are composed for a sacramental purpose and there was no possibility to think of a worldly transaction." It can be seen that this is hardly convincing.

We come across the mention of a number of categories of priests and this has led most of the scholars to imagine that the sacrifice must have become elaborate even in the days of the Ṛgveda. It should however be remembered that this need not be so unless we presume all the duties of those priests in the later ritual to have existed even in the early hymns. Even taking the case of the 'hotṛ' priest, we cannot say that he did all the duties ascribed to him in the later ritual right from the beginning. His duties have come to be evolved in course of time and so too it must have happened in the case of the other priests, mentioned in the hymns of the Ṛgveda. If we could have got a correct picture about the evolution of the various classes of priests in the Ṛgveda, we would have got full material to determine the various stages of the growth of the sacrifice. It is for this reason therefore that we ought to take into account the growth of the different categories of priests as referred to in the hymns of the Ṛgveda.

94. VMH Vol. I, p. 11.

95. VMH Vol. I, p. 259; cf. Chapter I above.

96. Op. cit. p. 69.

ṚTVIJ :⁹⁷

Derived from ṛtu+yaj, the word appears to be used in the sense of the priest offering worship at stated intervals, at a fairly late stage of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice as is indicated by reference to him in only about seventeen passages in the Ṛgveda. The word appears to have originated with Agni in the sacrifice kindled at fixed intervals, to whom also it is applied in most of the passages, where he is referred to as the 'ṛtvij' of the sacrifice'. (I. 1.1, 44.11; X.7.5, 21.7). He is also referred to as 'hotṛ' at I.1.1, 45.7, VIII.44.6) and as such is said to be laid down in a sacrifice (V.22.2, 26.7). With the priesthood of Agni in view, Indrāgni are also referred to as 'ṛtvijā' at VIII.38.1. Agni is said to be the 'eighth ṛtvij' (X.114.9) in addition to the seven priests of the later ritual (IX.114.3).

HOTR :⁹⁸

Hotṛ is apparently the oldest of the priests. It was he who used to invoke the gods by reciting the hymns and make offerings to them. In fact we can imagine the earliest stage of the sacrifice, when he was the only priest of the sacrifice. Being the earliest one, he came to occupy an important place in the system of sacrifice. He thus could be considered to be the best of them (āyajiṣṭha at X.2.1). It was through him that the gods could be propitiated and as a similar part was played by Agni, he also came to be called a 'hotṛ'. The two came to be linked up together in the Āprī hymns and came to be designated as 'the Divine Hotṛs'⁹⁹ like ṛtvij. The term 'hotṛ' is also used in the sense of a priest in general, particularly when the priests are said to be five (II.34.14)¹⁰⁰ or seven (X.35.10; 61.1, etc.).¹⁰¹

Offerings which were given to the gods by the hotṛs were placed in fire and hence such offerings appear to have come to be known as 'hotrā' (I.36.7, 122.9 etc.).¹⁰² Certain hymns as they used to be recited in the beginning by the 'hotṛ' came to be designated as 'hotrā' (vide Chapter II. p. 30). As Agni knows the offerings as well as the hymns, he comes to be called 'hotrāvid' (V.8.3) and 'hotravāh' (V.26.7). At two places the names of the seven priests have been specified (II.1.2; X.91.10) as 'hotṛ', 'potṛ', 'neṣṭṛ', 'agnidh', 'praśāstṛ', 'adhvaryu' and 'brahman'. It will be noticed that the Udgātṛ of the later days is absent from the list. It is therefore not correct to identify the duties of some of these priests with those of his namesake in the later days. The names of these priests apparently signify

97. V.I. Vol. I, p. 112.

98. V.I. Vol. II, p. 508.

99. AHR. B.U.J. 1945-6; cf. also X.65.10.

100. Perhaps they are hotṛ, potṛ, agnidhra, brahman and praśāstṛ referred to in II.36.

101. V.H. Vol. I, S.B.E. 32 p. 252.

102. At X.15.9 Pitṛs are said to be 'hotrāvidah'.

some broad duties and not their relative position in the sacrifice as in the later days. Just as the Udgātṛ came to be associated with the worship later but came to occupy an important position with the rise in importance of the Sāmaveda and the introduction of the ritual based on the three Vedas and the three priests, so too the relative position and the nature of the duty of the priest must have undergone changes in the course of the evolution of the ritual.¹⁰³

It appears to have become customary at a later stage to choose the hotṛ priest for the sacrifice and establish him ceremoniously at the place of sacrifice (X.21.1). At X.176.3, he is referred to as taken to the place of sacrifice. (cf. also IV.15.1) and established there. Devāpi is thus said to be taking his place as 'hotṛ' (X.98.5). For the idea of hotṛ priest to be established, cf. III.9.9, 19.5; V.4.3; VII.73.2; X.7.5, etc. It is indicated at X.11.3 (yadimūśantamūśātāmanu kratum) that both the parties must be willing for such an assignment. The ceremony with which the gods are said to have established Agni as hotṛ at X.52.6, is possibly indicative of a similar ceremony with which the mortal hotṛ was also established. Very possibly a seat was earmarked for him at the place of sacrifice as indicated at II.9.1 (hotṛsadana). He is however referred to as moving about the sacrificial fire for the discharge of his duties (cf. VII.1.16, 23, pari yameti adhvaṛeṣu hotā, I.173.3). It is indicated at III.14.5, that he would put the offerings in fire with his hands raised.

Agni's request to Viśvedevas at X.52.1 to give him instructions regarding his duties would indicate that after his election (hotā vṛtaḥ) and his taking the seat (niṣadya), the hotṛ priest could receive certain suggestions regarding some of the aspects of the procedure. As indicated at X.52.2, he would choose the Adhvaryu priest and instruct him. At X.52.3, an objection¹⁰⁴ raised against the choice of the hotṛ priest by the gods is answered by pointing out the grounds for his choice. This would indicate that certain criterion used to be followed regarding the choice of the hotṛ priest. It would be his previous experience as indicated here.

His place of importance in the system of sacrifice can be said to have been immortalised by the association of the word hotṛ with Agni. In later days however the place of importance went to 'Brahman', though the latter had not much actual work in the beginning. It is possible that sometime the duty of the 'Brahman' was done by the 'hotṛ' himself and at times he used to act as Purohita, another office which came to be introduced in course of time.

103. cf. II.20.3 referred to above.

104. The hotṛship of Agni is objected on the ground of his relation with yama (ayam yo hotā kila so yamasya) and the oblations to Pitṛs that he carries. The reply indicates how he is also connected with the sacrifice of the gods (ahar ahar jāyate māsi māsi | atha devā dadhire havyavāham).

It was not anyway distinction in duty but the place of honour that marks the difference between the *hotṛ*, the *brahman* and the *purohita*.

In the beginning, his duty apparently was to look after the entire performance but afterwards he appears to have come to be associated with the '*adhvaryu*' whose office was introduced to look after mainly the actual performance. This transition to the two-priests-stage is indicated at III.35.10 (*adhvaryorvā prayataṁ śakra hastāt, hoturvā yajñam haviṣo juṣasva*), where alternation is referred to and at III.53.3 (*śamsāvādhvaryo prati me gr̥ṇihindrāya vāṇaḥ kṛṇavāva juṣtaṁ*), where the worship is said to be jointly offered by the two. This would indicate how there was no idea of superiority in the status of the one or the other.

ADHVARYU :¹⁰⁵

As the derivation indicates¹⁰⁶ the office appears to be introduced to look after the details of the performance in association with the *hotṛ* priest. As pointed out by Haug,¹⁰⁷ these two priests have continued in the Avesta ritual as *Zaoṭr* and *Rathwi* and it can be inferred that the Avesta ritual parted company with the *Ṛgveda* ritual at this stage.

The reference to *Agni*—who has been chosen as *hotṛ* (X.52.2)—asking *Aśvins* to work as *Adhvaryus* (op. cit.) probably indicates that the *Adhvaryus* at some stage, were chosen by the *hotṛs*.

Adhvaryus are said to be scattering the *barhis* grass and pouring certain oblations in fire (VII.2.4). In most of the passages, however, they are associated with the pressing and offering of *soma*, possibly indicating that it was mainly for the purposes of a *soma*-ritual¹⁰⁸ that the office of *Adhvaryu* came to be introduced. That is perhaps the reason why the *Adhvaryus* are referred to as many, the number of the persons assisting depending upon the amount of *soma*-juice to be pressed. Five *Adhvaryus*¹⁰⁹ referred to at III.7.7 may indicate the number of those priests moving about in the place of sacrifice.

They are said to be working for the preparation of the *soma*-juice in general (VI.44.3; VIII.4.11, 13; X.30.15, '*adhvaryavaḥ sunuta indrāya somaṁ*'). At V.31.12, they are referred to as operating the pressing stone for the purpose. For their skill, they are referred to as '*suhasta*' at IX.97.37, X.30.2, 41.3. They are also said to be pouring the *soma*-juice, pressed out by the stones, on the strainer

105. V.I. Vol. I, p. 21; ASL p. 258; VMH Vol. III, 423; ABI pp. 13-18.

106. from a + *dhvar* 'to be defective'—so one who ensures the perfection in the performance.

107. ABI p. 13.

108. cf. also *potṛ*, *grāvagrābh* below.

109. VMH Vol. III, p. 423.

and purifying it (IX.51.1, *adribhiḥ sutam somam pavitra āsrja*). After it is ready, they are said to be offering it to the gods (VI.42.4; VII.92.2; 98.1, *dugdhamamśum juhotana*; VIII.24.16; 32.24). For their multiple relationship with soma, they have come to be designated as 'madhupāṇi' (X.41.3). For this important role in the actual work, they are given a leading place in the sacrificial performance and as such are referred to as 'rathirāsaḥ' (IX.97.37).

UDGĀTR :

The word is referred to only once in the R̥gveda and signifies a priest singing the *sāman* hymn (II.43.2, *udgāteva śakune sāma gāyasi*). The solitary mention of the term is significant and indicates that the office came to be introduced pretty late and that the priest was not known by the name in the beginning. The list of seven priests at II.1.2 and X.91.10, does not include the 'udgātr' priest. Though the reference to 'sāman' hymns is frequent,¹¹⁰ the name of the *udgātr* is not associated with them except at II.43.2, indicating that the singing of the *sāman* hymns was done by some other priest or that the person doing it was known by some other name. Thus 'sāmabhṛt' is referred to at VII.33.14 and at V.54.14, 'sāmavipra' is said to be protected by Maruts, they also being singers.

BRAHMAN :¹¹¹

The priest *brahman* referred to in the R̥gvedic hymns does not appear to have acquired the position of the superintending priest, which he did in the later ritual. Oldenberg thinks that the *brahman* priest is not referred to in the R̥gveda at all, the word signifying merely a 'priest'. It however appears that the office of the priest had come to be introduced in the R̥gvedic sacrifice, perhaps merely with a view to do some honour to a person. Occasionally he is said to be singing (I.80.1, 164.34; II.2.6; VI.45.7), but that does not appear to be either a strenuous or regular duty in a sacrificial performance. A sacrificial vessel is referred to as 'brāhmaṇa' at I.15.5 and II.36.5, from which Indra is said to be drinking the soma-juice.

As the ritual has not become very much complicated nor rigid, *Brahmā* does not appear to have much work in the sacrifice and hence his idleness is referred to at VIII.92.30 (*mo śu brahmeva tandrayurbhuvah*), where Indra is asked to enjoy the soma-juice and not be merely lazy like the *brahman* priest. The reference at IV.58.2 (*upa brahmā śruṇavacchasyamānam*) may indicate that some time, *brahmā* was merely to listen to a hymn being sung (and watch whether it was rightly done). There is no reason why he should be

110. Vide Chapter II, p. 32.

111. ASL p. 260; RPV p. 253; ABI pp. 20-21; V.I. Vol. II, p. 77; RVO 396, 7.

considered as identical with brāhmaṇacchaminis of the later ritual as Macdonell, Keith and Dr. Deshmukh do.¹¹²

PUROHITA :¹¹³

Like hotṛ, 'purohita' is mentioned very frequently and the epithet is being associated with Agni as being the foremost in the sacrifice. (cf. V.11.2; X.150.4, 'prathamah purohitaḥ' at I.102.8 even as 'januṣā purohitaḥ'). The priestly service in general has come to be referred to as 'purohitiḥ' at a few places (VII.60.12, 61.7, 83.4; X.70.7). As Agni is referred to as 'hotṛ' and 'purohita' simultaneously (cf. I.1.1; III.3.2; V.11.2), it appears that the hotṛ, with his important place in the sacrifice could be considered as a 'purohita'. The idea of having the office of a purohita must be comparatively later.

At VI.47.24, a Bharadvāja poet is referring to separate gifts obtained for the Atharvan priests and Pāyu, who had apparently helped him in the sacrifice. Thus the performance of a joint sacrifice by different patrons, where a number of priests would be officiating and one of them would be chosen as the leader, seems to have given rise to the idea of a 'purohita' among those priests. Even in the same family the chief would be the leader, followed by his family members as his assistants as indicated by the 'purohiti' of the Vasiṣṭhas referred to above. Thus the office of the 'purohita' seems to have been introduced to facilitate the performances of quantitatively bigger rites and not the qualitatively bigger (or complicated) rites. This is also recognised by Max Müller who writes (p. 258) "The original institution of a purohita as a spiritual adviser of a king or a chief need not be regarded as the sign of a far advanced hierarchical system." Oldenberg's opinion¹¹⁴ regarding the office of the purohita, not being the creator of the power of priesthood, appears to be quite understandable in this context, particularly as the convenience of the performance was the dominating idea in the introduction thereof.

In the Ṛgveda, only Devāpi (at X.98.7) and Vasiṣṭha (at X.150.5) are referred to as 'purohita'. At X.98.7 (yaddevāpiḥ śantanave purohito hotṛāya vṛtaḥ), Devāpi is said to be chosen as purohita to do the duties of the hotṛ, indicating that the origin of the office had no idea of distinction in duty as its basis. The same is indicated by Agni and other gods like Sūrya being referred to as 'purohita' (VIII.101.12), as they stand foremost among their groups as purohita among the priests.

112. Vide RVL p. 342.

113. V.I. Vol. II, pp. 5-8; ASL pp. 256-258; RVL p. 156; RVO pp. 380-83.

114. cf. *op. cit.* p. 156. Dr. Deshmukh agrees with him.

POTR :¹¹⁵

As Macdonell imagines, the duty of the priest was to purify the soma juice. With his purifying ability in view, Agni's duty is said to be that of the potṛ priest (tava potraṁ at I.76.4, II.1.2, X.2.2, 91.10). With the same point in view, Agni is referred to as 'potā' (at I.94.6, II.5.2, IV.9.3, VIII.16.5) and soma at IX.67.22. As Adhvaryu used to do the duty of purifying the soma juice (see above) the office seems to be introduced to relieve him of a part of his duty.

The vessel in which soma-juice was specifically offered to Maruts and Draviṇodas is referred to as 'potra' at I.15.2, II.36.2, 37.2, 4).

PRAŚĀSTR :¹¹⁶

Agni is referred to as 'praśāstr' at I.94.6, II.5.4 and the duty of the priest is said to belong to Agni at II.1.2 and X.91.10. He appears to be associated with the soma ritual as his vessel is referred to at II.36.6 (praśastra), from which Mitrāvaruṇā are to drink the soma juice. At II.36.4, Agni is requested to drink soma from the cup of 'Agnidh', Indra, from the cup of 'brahman' and 'rājānā' (i.e., Mitrāvaruṇā) from the cup of 'praśāstr'. Thus the duties of different priests appear to be to give offerings to different divinities in a joint sacrifice. Haug identifies him with Maitrāvaruṇa of the later days. The transition from the one to the other however presupposes a process of elaboration of duties in course of time.

ĀVAYĀJ :

A priest mentioned in the Aśvamedha sacrifice (I.162.5). Haug¹¹⁷ identifies him with 'pratipraṣṭhātr' of the later ritual without any reasons. The evidence from the R̥gveda does not substantiate the conjecture.

AGNIMINDH :¹¹⁸

Like Āvayāj, he is referred to at I.162.5 only. No details are known about his duty though it is apparently to kindle the fire as indicated at X.41.3, where as 'agnidh', he is said to be 'dhṛtadākṣa', indicating the possession of strength required for kindling the fire from the Araṇis. From a vessel named after him (āgnidhra), Agni is said to be offered the soma-juice. He appears to be the same as 'agnidh' referred to at II.1.2 and X.91.10, with whom fire is identified.

115. V.I. Vol. II, p. 24.

116. V.I. Vol. II, p. 41; ABI p. 16.

117. ABI pp. 13-14.

118. ABI pp. 15-16.

GRĀVAGRĀBH :¹¹⁹

He also is mentioned at I.162.5 only. He was apparently meant to help actively in operating the pressing stones, a duty done by Adhvaryus in the beginning. It is only in the later ritual that the pressing-stone operator came to be specifically so designated.

NEṢṬR :¹²⁰

Agni is referred to as 'neṣṭr' at I.15.3 and II.5.5. His duty is identified with that of Agni at II.1.2 and X.91.10. A vessel assigned to him (called neṣṭra), through which Draviṇodas is offered soma-juice is referred to at I.15.9, II.37.3, 4.

UPAVAKTR :

Derived from the root upa+vac, the word appears to signify a person, who would offer praises from near (the altar). Thus Agni is said to be 'upavākya' (fit to be prayed) at X.69.12. Indra is said to be 'upavācya' at I.132.2 and Savitr at IV.54.1. Bhṛgu is said to have offered worship with homage at I.127.7. The duty implied is apparently the same as performed by the hotṛ priest as is clear from V.49.4 (upa yad voce adhvarasya hotā). The noun 'upavāka' appears to be used in the sense of worship in general (I.164.8, namasvanta upavākamiyuh).

Thus 'upavaktā' appears to be the priest in charge of the performance in general, who was in a position to direct the sacrificial activity. It is for this reason that Agni is said to be 'upavaktā' at IV.9.5 (adhvariyaṭāmupavaktā janānām). At VI.71.5,¹²¹ Savitr is compared with 'upavaktr' in respect of his hands raised up for directing the activity and the utterance of the orders is referred to at IX.95.5 (iṣyan vācamupavakteva hotuh). In the latter passage, he is referred to as distinct from the 'hotṛ'. Geldner¹²² takes the word to refer to 'praśāstr', the assistant of the hotṛ in later days. Macdonell¹²³ identifies him with Maitrāvaruṇā of later days. Anyway, the word indicates that the designations of posts with duties were not finally fixed and the duty assigned to 'upavaktr' roughly indicates a transition to the stage of a priest like brahman or 'purohita'.

Thus it will be observed that the class of the priests was in a process of formation as the sacrifice was gradually growing. The priests, by virtue of their position as the brains behind and the operators of the sacrifice have had a unique role to play in the origin and the growth of the sacrifice.

119. op. cit.

120. V.I. Vol. p. 459; V.H. Part II. S.B.E. Vol. 46. p. 208.

121. Vide Chapter XII, D.

122. Der Rigveda Vol. I, p. 430, II.174. and III. p. 91

123. ERE XII p. 611.

We can observe some broad stages by which the class of the priests has evolved. Thus, in the beginning of the sacrifice, there must have been only one priest, doing all that was required for a simple performance. Another stage is marked by the introduction of Adhvaryu, possibly for the purpose of a soma-sacrifice as indicated above. Still at this stage the idea of the superiority of the position of the one or the other does not seem to have come into existence as indicated by II.16.5, where both of them are referred to as 'vr̥ṣaṇā adhvaryū'. It may be noted that in the Āpri hymns also only the hotṛ and the adhvaryu have been referred to.¹²⁴ The third stage seems to have been indicated by the introduction of other priests, whose designations have not been fixed. The assignment of separate designations may have been necessitated partly by the growing duties in the performances and partly by the requirement of the joint performances as indicated above. This quantitative growth of the performance appears to have necessitated the introduction of a head priest like the 'brahmā' or 'purohita'. The phenomenon of Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha having been the official priests of the Bharatas indicates that the point was decided on merit, the princes still having the control of the sacrifice in their hands by having the right of choice.

The introduction of offices like those of upavakṛ, praśāstr, brahmā and purohita would mark the fourth stage, when the control of the priests over the sacrificial performance appears to have come to be gradually defined. Thus the over-all picture about the evolution of the class of the priests leaves the impression about the process of growth of the idea and practice of sacrifice still going on and not having attained its end.

124. it is therefore that in the Avesta, where the Āpri ritual has been carried (Afringans), only two corresponding priests are referred to. This further supports the conjecture above that Avesta ritual appears to have parted company with the R̥gveda ritual at the two-priest stage.

Chapter Eight

CONTRIBUTION OF THE PATRONS TO THE
GROWTH OF THE SACRIFICE

ता सुदेवाय दाक्षुषे सुमेधामवितारिणीम् ।

घृतैर्गव्यं तिमिक्षतम् ॥ (RV VIII. 5.6)

मा जारिषुः सूरयः सुव्रतासः । (RV I. 12.5.7)

SYNOPSIS :

Prayer for liberal patrons, indicating their importance—respectful attitude of the poets—intelligent experiment of mutual co-operation in the sphere of social behaviour—connecting link, sacrifice—classes on the principle of division of labour—class consciousness with understanding of limitations—gifts asked for patrons as well as themselves—employment of the words *maghavan* and *sūri*—Aryan and non-Aryan patrons—*maghavan* and *sūri* distinguished—sacrifice as measuring rod of progressiveness—growth helped by individuals and groups—

Groups—particular tribes—Jahnus, worshippers of *Aśvins*—Bharata's support for Agni ritual—a number of generations of Bharata's—*Vadhryaśva*, possibly the originator of Agni-cult—*Divodāsa*, a keen soma-sacrificer—stimulating the cult—*Sudās*—some outstanding performances—

Pañcajanās—their connection with Agni and *Indra*—a general reference to sacrificing people though referring to certain tribes in the beginning—Five tribes mentioned at I.108.8 considered—*yadus*—their descendants—*Indra*-worship—*Turvaśas*—enthusiasm about sacrifice—their overthrow—*Druhyus*—along with *Anus* and *Turvaśas* worshippers of *Aśvins*—*Anus*, members of the family—*Pūrus*—a powerful race—their family tradition regarding sacrifice—some individuals opposing—their residence—*Purukutsa*, *Trasadasyu* etc.—smaller clans—*Śrñjayas*—their family—*Ruśamas* with *Ṛṇaṇcāya*—other individual sacrificers—some petty chiefs undertaking joint performances—*Kuruṅga* and *diviṣṭi*—*Citra*, *Cyavatāna* etc.—sacrifice stressed as standard of Aryan way of life—

Sacrificers variously referred to—Aryan sacrificers contrasted with non-Aryan non-sacrificers—soma sacrifice, a variety of epithets—liberality of patrons—patrons glorified with respectful admiration, gratitude and affection—well-balanced classes—co-operation, leading to prosperity—

In a characteristic prayer, a poet belonging to the *Gr̥tsamada* family is praying that he should not come across the want of a good liberal patron (II.2811, *māhaṁ maghono varuṇa priasya bhūridāvna āvidam̐ śūnamāpeḥ* |).¹ Though the prayer may indicate the desire of the poet to be in possession of ample wealth always (c, *mā rāyo rājan tsuyamādava sthām* |), it points out the importance attached to

1. The line is repeated in the hymns II. 27, 28, 29, though the hymns 27 and 29 are addressed to *Adityas* and *Viśvedevas* respectively, indicating that the three hymns are a characteristic composition of a poet from the *Gr̥tsamada* family. For the meaning of the word *śūna* cf. VII.1.11 (*mā śūne agne niṣadāma nr̥ṇām*).

the class of patrons in the sacrifice. The sacrifice has grown to its later proportions, principally on account of the support it received from rich and liberal patrons. It is true that the patrons too stood to gain by the sacrifice; still the poets appear to be stressing the importance of the patrons during the different stages of sacrifice in the Ṛgveda. In fact, the system of sacrifice marks the early stages of the co-operative experiment that had been set up by the intelligentsia in the social structure of the time, though co-operation on a smaller scale and in a limited sphere of activity must have been known earlier. It is for this reason that the poets are pretty frequently wishing prosperity both for themselves, as well as their patrons jointly (cf. I.136.7, ...tadaśyāmo maghavāna vayanā ca |) cf. also I. 140.12; II.2.11; V.65.6; VI.10.5, 46.9; VII.3.8, 8.7; IX.20.4, 98.12; X.115.5.

Even as the sacrifice formed the connecting link of mutual obligation between the human beings on the one hand and the gods on the other as indicated in the Gītā (III.11), so too it became the connecting link between the patrons on the one hand and the priests on the other.

In a slightly different sense, however, the sacrifice can be looked upon as the wedge that came to separate the two classes from each other in the course of time. The idea of 'classes' in the social organism apparently came to be introduced with the early growth of the sacrifice based on the sound principle of the division of labour in social undertaking. As the sacrifice grew in importance, the two classes became more and more defined in their individualistic existence and status. It is true that in any society, when the duties of different people become more and more well-defined, the introduction of a class-system becomes inevitable. In the days of the R̥gveda, the sacrifice has merely become instrumental in bringing into existence these two classes, which apparently have continued in a fairly mobile state of existence for a pretty long time. It would appear that the two classes continued to feel their interests inter-linked for a pretty long time, with necessary appreciation of individual limitations, as the above passages would amply indicate.²

A majority of the passages indicate an attitude of humility towards the patrons, not only because their gifts depended upon them but also because they appreciated the hazards of the situation faced by the patrons in fighting the battles, necessary for winning the prosperity they desired. In course of time however, when there was greater stability in the social structure and more of peaceful life, the performances of sacrifice became more elaborate and the scale of importance turned in favour of the class of the priests. In

2. cf. also I.141.13 for an indication of the desirability of co-operative effort.
ami ca ye maghavāno vayan ca miham na sūro ati niṣtatanyuh).

the days of the R̥gveda however, the social structure has remained less complicated, the sacrifice also has not grown in its extent of elaboration to its later proportions.

Thus we find the poets asking gifts for their patrons from the divinities and expecting gifts from their patrons. At places only the gifts are directly expected from the divinities but there too the underlying idea being that they can come through the sacrifices which are being performed under the patronage of the sacrificers.

Thus the divinities are asked to give food to the patrons (I.73.5; VII.8.7; VIII.24.6); wealth (I.77.4, 124.10, VI.10.5, VII.5.9, 16.9, IX.20.4); shelter, protection and fame (II.2.12, VI.46.9, VII.32.7, VII.74.5, VIII.13.12, 60.6, X.22.15, 115.5, etc.); vital power (I.93.12; VII.58.3); royal glory (V.10.6, VI.8.6; VII.95.3). They are requested to shine upon the patrons and prosper (I.140.10, 141.13; VII.18.21); to keep them away from injuries (II.33.4); to love them and grant long life (I.73.5, 73.9, 125.7; VII.67.10, X.147.3).

The words 'maghavan' and 'sūri' are ordinarily used in the sense of liberal patrons. Sometimes the word 'maghavan' is used as an adjective of the Sūris (II.6.4, *sa bodhi sūrirmaghavā*; X.81.6). At VIII.10.4, it is indicated that there were some non-Aryan worshippers of the Aśvinā (*yayoradhi pra yajñā asūre santi sūrayaḥ*).³ At VIII.5.31, Aśvins are said to be coming to the Aryans from their non-Aryan worshippers (*ā vahethe parākāt pūrvīḥ aśnantau aśvinā | iṣo dāsiramartyā*). This may indicate that some of the non-Aryans were converted to Aryan mode of worship or that some of the divinities were common to the worship of both the Aryans and non-Aryans.

At two or three places however, some sort of distinction is sought to be drawn between them by their separate mention. Thus at I.73.5 (*vi prkṣo agne maghavāno aśyur vi sūrayo dadato viśva-māyuh* |), where the repetition of the preposition 'vi' clearly indicates maghavans and sūris as separate categories. It may be noted that in the passages where food is expected, the word 'maghavan' is used; and where long life is expected (I.73.9, 125.7; VII.67.10, 69.8), the word 'sūri' is used. It may be pure accident but about the separate character of the two, there can be no doubt. At VII.16.7 (*tve agne svāhuta priyāsaḥ santu sūrayaḥ | yantāro ye maghavāno janānāmūrvān dayanta gonām* ||) the independent character is not so obvious. At X.61.22, however, (*rakṣā ca no maghonaḥ pāhi sūrin*), the use of two independent synonymous words to convey the idea of protection leaves no doubt about their independent character, though

3. Vide Chapter VIII; Sāy. explains 'asūre' as 'stotrahite'. The word is used only once in the RV. At V.32.6, 'asūrya' is adjective of 'tamas' and 'asūre' appears to refer to non-Aryans (cf. 'Kṛṣṇām tvacam' at I.130.8 and 'dāsam varṇam' II.12.4).

it is not clear what the distinction exactly is. Derivatively, 'sūris' from svar) may be predominantly said to be characterised by their power or glory and maghavans (magha—mañh) by their outstanding generosity.

Regarding the gifts which are received from the patrons, sometimes, they are said to be inspired by the divinties (I.48.2, VII.96.2, IX.1.3). Occasionally the credit is given to the will of the patrons (II.2.13, VII.67.9). Some of these outstanding gifts have come to be specifically mentioned and glorified in hymns.⁴

It will thus be realised that the interests of both the sections, that were gradually emerging into existence were intimately connected with the sacrifice and as such the sacrifice was also gathering strength day by day. Whatever may be the idea of progressive spirit that the Aryans had in their mind in designating themselves as 'ārya' as contrasted with the others whom they styled as 'anārya', it becomes clear that in the course of time, the sacrifice became the measuring rod for the progressiveness of spirit as conceived by them. Thus the Dāsas, the dasyus and the Paṇis are to be struck down to the lowliest depth because they were non-sacrificers. It is for this reason that, while pointing out the characteristic deeds of Indra, the poet of II.12 refers to him as having extended protection to the sacrificers (v.6, yuktagrāvṇo yo avitā sutasomasya; v.15, sunvate pacate dudhra ā cit; v.14, yaḥ sunvantamavati) and having subdued the Dāsas (v.4b, yo dāsaṁ varṇamadharaṁ guhā kaḥ). The contrast between the Aryans and the Dāsas is made clearer at I.51.8 (vijānihi āryān ye ca dasyavaḥ—barhiṣmate randhayāvratān—śākī bhava yajamānasya coditā), where Indra is requested to be a staunch inspirer of the sacrificing Aryans against the non-sacrificing Dasyus. Paṇis are also referred to as struck down because of their non-sacrificing attitude (VII.6.3, pañīnraśraddhān. ayajñān. pūrvaś-cakāra aparān ayajyūn).⁵

In this way, when sacrifice was gaining in importance, a number of groups or sections among the people appear to have taken themselves enthusiastically to the cult and given it a great impetus. There is a general mention of this section of the society at a number of places. Thus Agni is said to belong to them at I.36.1 (yavhaṁ. . . . viśāṁ devayatinām). The Aryan tribe is said to be attending upon Agni for sacrifice at I.77.3 (taṁ medheṣu prathamam devayantirviśa upa bruvate dasmamāriḥ). Aśvins are said to be going to them at VII.69.2 (viśo yena gacchatho devayantiḥ. . . .).⁶

The tribe of Jahnus appears to have similarly distinguished itself particularly in the Aśvinā worship as at both the places, they

4. Vide—Dānastutis in Chapter XI; cf. also Chapter IV.

5. Vide 'non-sacrificers' in Chapter IX.

6. cf. also II.6.3, X.11.4, 41.3.

are referred to, they are associated with *Aśvins* only (cf. III.58.6, 'purāṇamokaḥ sakhyaṁ śivaṁ vām, yuvornarā draviṇam janhāvyām', indicates the association with a long tradition; and I.116.19, 'ā janhāvīm samanāsapavājaistrirāṇho bhāgaṁ dadhatīmāyātām', indicates the characteristic (*savana*) offerings of the tribe thrice a day.)⁷ This may further indicate how certain sections and groups in the society had come to specialise in a particular mode of worship of a particular divinity.

BHARATAS :⁸

Bharatas appear to have played a significant role in the evolution of the sacrifice. Their connection with *Agni* worship appears to be so intimate that *Agni* is said to be shining brightly for them (V.11.1, *dyumad vibhāti bharatebhyaḥ śuciḥ*). *Agni* is said to belong to them (VII.8.4, *pra pra ayam bharatasya agniḥ*). 'Bhārata' has become an epithet of *Agni* (II.7.1, 5; IV.25.4, VI.16.19, 45). Bhārati possibly indicates the chief family deity of the Bharatas on account of some distinctive mode of worship evolved by them as illustrated in the *Āprī* hymns.⁹

At III.33.11, 12, *Viśvāmitra* is referred to as helping them in crossing the confluence of *Vipāt* and *Śutudrī*, when they were out on an expedition (*atāriṣurbharatā gavyavaḥ*). The importance of the tribe in the sacrifice, which they helped to grow on account of their association with *Viśvāmitra* has been described in a characteristically proud expression on his part (III.53.12, *viśvāmitrasya rakṣati brahmedaṁ bhārataṁ janam*).¹⁰ Later on when *Vasiṣṭha* became their priest, they had possibly grown weaker in their political power as suggested at VII.33.6 (*daṇḍā ived go'janāsa āsan paricchinā bharatā arbhakāsah*). The priestly service of *Vasiṣṭha* however is said to have changed the situation and helped them to be restored to glory (*op.cit. abhavacca pura etā vasiṣṭha ādittṛtsūnām viśo a prathanta*; cf. also VII.83.4).

Like the *Pūrus*, the Bharatas are also said to be residing on the banks of the river *Saraswatī* (III.23.4, *saraswatyaṁ revadagne didiḥi*). Though some of the *Pūru* kings are referred to as being on inimical terms with some of the Bharatas, I.63.7, VII.18.13, *Indra* is referred as having helped both of them indicating how both the clans were observing *Indra* worship enthusiastically. Both the families were associated with the *Viśvāmitra* and *Vasiṣṭha*.

Generations of the Bharatas, mentioned in the *Ṛgveda* appear to have consistently carried on the cult of sacrifice, whatever their

7. cf. under 'savana' Chapter V, pp. 105-8.
8. V.I. Vol. II, 94-97; Ved. Stu. II.136; VMH Vol. I.111.
9. AHR. B.U.J. 1946 pp. 32-33.
10. Vide Chapter VII under 'Viśvāmitra'.

political status. At VI.61.1, Saraswatī is said to have given Divodāsa (as a son) to Vadhryaśva. It may be on account of this incident that the later generations took to the cult of the sacrifice more enthusiastically. This Vadhryaśva is also mentioned at X.69, where too his close association with sacrifice is indicated. Perhaps it was he who introduced the tradition of sacrifice in the family as indicated by the reference to his kindling the fire first at X.69.4 and by reference to Agni as a child in his lap at X.69.10. He is said to have done it in ancient days (X.69.12, . . . sanakāt preddhaḥ). It is for this reason that Agni is said to belong to him and his leadership in that regard praised (X.69.1, bhadrā agnervadhryaśvasya samdr̥śo, vāmi prañītiḥ . . .). His characteristic ghr̥ta offering is indicated at X.69.2, which is said to have led to prosperity (vardhanam).

Like his father, Divodāsa was also a keen follower of the fire-ritual. Thus fire is said to belong to him (VIII.103.2, daivodāso agniḥ) and to Bharatas through him at VI.16.19 (agniragāmi bhāratāḥ . . . divodāsasya satpatīḥ). That he was a soma-sacrificer is made clear at VI.16.5 (divodāsāya sunvate) and by reference to his having received help from Indra on account of soma offered by him (I.53.10, II.14.7, VI.18.13, VI.31.4, VI.47.22, VII.19.8, VIII.53.2). His connection with Indra, Agni and Maruts is referred to at VII.18.25 (divodāsam na pitaram sudāsaḥ), though no Dānastuti appears in his honour. His close association with Bharadvājas is indicated at a number of places, where the help he received along with them from the Aśvins is referred to (I.112.13, 14, 116.18). He appears to have stimulated the cult of Indra-worship among his followers, who are referred to by his name at I.130.10 (divodāsebhiḥ stavāna indraḥ), though he is referred to as a Bharata (VI.16.4).

SUDĀS :¹¹

Though the father of Sudās (Pijavana, VII.18.22, 23, 25), may have continued the tradition of sacrifice, nothing is known about him. Sudās has the unique position of being associated with two great priestly families of high sacrificial traditions. Thus at III.53.9-11,¹² Indra is said to be helping Sudās on account of the priestly help of Viśvāmitra (viśvāmitro yadavahat sudāsamapriyāyata . . .), which consisted of a soma-sacrifice as indicated at III.53.10 (. . . adhware sute sacā). In an equally emphatic statement, Indra is said to have helped him on account of the help of Vasiṣṭhaḥ (VII.33.3, evennu dāśarājñe sudāsam prāvadindro brahmaṇā vo vasiṣṭhaḥ; cf. also VII.18.17, VII.19.3, VII.20.2, 60.9, 83.1.4, etc.). This triumph of Vasiṣṭha family is being described in a reminiscent mood by a later poet, who also describes how the family's invocation has brought

11. V.I. Vol. II, p. 454; VMH I.107.

12. cf. Vel. B.U.J. Vol. III, Part VI, pp. 38-43.

Indra in preference to the sacrifices of other persons (VII.33.2, where 'Pāsadyumna'¹³ is mentioned). The soma-sacrifice also associates Sudās with Aśvins, who are supposed to have given him his wife Sudevī (I.112.19). His worship of Mitrāvaruṇā, where the priestly help is expected to be appreciated even by his enemies is referred to at VII.64.3 (mitrastanno varuṇo devo aryah pra sādhiṣṭhebhīḥ pathi-bhirnayantu | bravat yathā na ādariḥ sudāsa iṣā madema saha devagopāḥ ||), indicating how the outstanding results of certain performances used to convert people towards the cult of sacrifice.

A general mention of the help he received from Vasiṣṭhas will be found at VII.20.2, 25.3, 32.10. It is however the Dāśarājña battle and the victory he gained therein as a result of the priestly service of Vasiṣṭha, that seems to have brought him as well as Vasiṣṭha to great prominence.

Two Bharata chiefs are mentioned as connected intimately with the fire-ritual (III.23.2, amanthiṣṭhām bhāratā revadagnīḥ devaśravā devavātaḥ...) on the banks of the rivers, Dṛṣadvatī, Āpayā and Sarasvatī (III.23.4).

Another Bharata is referred to as kindling fire for sacrifice at VI.16.4, where it is indicated how he was a keen sacrificer and stimulated the interest of his followers in sacrifice as well.

PAÑCAJANAS :

Like the Bharatas, the Pañcajanas also figure prominently in the evolution of the sacrifice in the days of the Ṛgveda. In a general way the 'pañca kṛṣṭis' or pañcacarṣanis' or 'pañcakṣitis' or pañcamānuṣas' have been mentioned as associated with the ritual and the consequential prosperity. Thus at IX.66.20 (agniḥ ṛṣiḥ pavamānaḥ pañcajanyaḥ purohitaḥ) and at I.100.12 (... pañcajanyo marutvānno bhavatvindra ūti), their association with Indra and soma worship is indicated. At V.32.11, Indra is said to be the good lord of 'pañcajanas' and as such worshipped by them twice a day. cf. also VIII.63.7 (pañcajanyaḥ viśā indre ghoṣā asṛkṣata). As such Indra is said to belong to them (I.7.9, indraḥ pañcakṣitinām). Indra is said to be the source of strength and prosperity to them (III.37.9, I.176.3).

Being connected with sacrifices in general, their association with Agni is quite apparent (X.45.6, janā yadagnimayajanta pañca and VI.11.4cd.). It is for the same reason that Uṣas is said to be awakening them (VII.75.4, pañcakṣitirbodhayanti).

The word 'pañcajana'¹⁴ may have been associated with five tribes only in the beginning, though later on it came to refer to all

13. He is not known to have participated in the Dāśarājña battle. cf. V.I. Vol. I, p. 523; Ved. Stu. 2, 130, 139.

14. VMH Vol. I, p. 105; V.I. II, pp. 341-2.

the people who followed the cult of sacrifice as would be clear from the references above. At IX.14.2 (girā yadī sabandhavaḥ pañcavrātā apasyavaḥ | pariṣkr̥nvanti....), it appears that the common ties which brought together the five tribes, appear to be referred to. Their employment of hymns (girā) and their dressing of soma juice are said to have brought them together (sabandhavaḥ), indicating that it was some common tradition regarding the sacrificial performances which made them form a compact group of the name. It is such association regarding soma-sacrifice that appears to have prompted the collection of soma hymns in a separate maṇḍala.

At I.108.8, five tribes have been mentioned individually as associated with Agni and Indra worship from very ancient days (yudindrāgnī yaduṣu turvaśeṣu yaḍ druhyuṣu anuṣu pūruṣu sthaḥ | ataḥ pari vṛṣaṇāvā hi yātamathā somasya pibatām sutasya). From the tone of vv.7-12 of the hymn, where the poet is requesting the divinities to come from all places (cf. v.7, brahmaṇi....rājani vā; v.10, avamasyām, madhyamasyām, paramasyām....), it appears that the poet is referring to five sacrificing tribes from all the directions. There is however no convincing evidence to support the view that those five only were known as 'pañcajanas'. It may be a pure accident that the peoples mentioned here are five in number. It appears to be purely for political reasons that they fought with Sudās in the famous Dāśarājña battle. As it will be observed below all of them were followers of the cult of the sacrifice as it was in prevalence at the time.

The role of the Bharatas in the evolution of the sacrifice and their tradition in that regard was so prominent that they would come to be included in any list of the five tribes on the criterion of the sacrifice, which appears to be associated with them. The employment of the words indicating five tribes in the seventh maṇḍala,¹⁵ which refers to the triumph of Sudās over kings including the five mentioned at I.108, would indicate that they could not be in view of the poets of VII.15, 75 and 79, where 'pañcajanas' are referred to as favoured by the divinities. So it would appear that even if the word 'pañcajana' referred to the five tribes, referred to at I.108 sometime, that association had come to be forgotten in course of time and the word had come to mean 'the sacrificing Aryans' in general.

YADUS :¹⁶

Out of nearly a dozen passages, where yadu or yadus are mentioned in the R̥gveda, their connection with sacrifice is suggested at VIII.10.5, where the divinities are said to be residing with them;

15. VII.15.2, 72.5, 75.4, 79.1.

16. V.I. Vol. II, p. 185.

at I.174.9, V.31.8, VI.20.12, VIII.7.18, where yadu is said to have been helped by the divinities. At X.62.10, a yadu prince is praised in a dānastuti for a gift of two dāsas. At VIII.9.14, the association with soma-sacrifice is clearly referred to.

The descendants of the yadus (yādvas)¹⁷ are glorified in a dānastuti at VIII.6.47 (trīṇi śātānyarvatām sahasrā daśa gonām | daduṣpajrāya sāmne), where they are said to have given very sumptuous gifts for a sāman hymn of the Pajra family.¹⁸ Another yādava prince is said to have suffered along with Turvaśa at the hands of Indra (VII.19.8) on account of wrong political alliance.

At VIII.6.46-48, Tirindara¹⁹ and Parśu,²⁰ appear to be referred to as belonging to the yādva group (śatamaham tirindare sahasraṁ parśāvā dade | rādhāmsi yādvānām), which is said to be well known (for their sacrificial gifts) (v.48, śravasā yādvam janam).

TURVAŚAS :²¹

In about ten passages, Indra's help to them has been referred to. At VI.27.7, a Turvaśa prince is said to be defeated by Indra in favour of Śrñjaya and at VII.18.6, another Turvaśa, who allied with others to form a group of ten (daśa rājānaḥ samitāḥ ayajyavaḥ VII.83.7), is said to have been thrown down in favour of Sudās. The irony in the description (puroḷā itturvśo yakṣurāsīt) very possibly is significant, indicating his enthusiasm for sacrificial performances. At VIII.4.19 and X.62.10, gifts given by Turvaśa have been referred to, indicating the sacrificial performances of the family. At VIII.10.5, their association in Aśvin worship is referred to.

Turviti²² referred to at I.61.11, II.13.12, V.19.6, possibly belonged to the Turvaśa family as Macdonell imagines. At I.112.23 he is said to be helped by Aśvins. Sāy. takes him to be a son of Vayya.²³

DRUHYUS :²⁴

At I.108 and VIII.10.5, their association with sacrifice has been referred to along with others. Their strength is referred to at VI.46.8. The clan of Druhyus thus appears to have prospered for some time and helped the growth of sacrifice; but in their association with others against Sudās in the Dāśarājña battle, they appear to be almost completely wiped off as indicated at VII.18.14 (ni gavyavo anavo druhyavaśca ṣaṣṭiḥ śatā suṣupuh ṣaṭsahasrā | ṣaṣṭhirvīrāso adhi ṣad

17. V.I. I, p. 190.

18. Vide Chapter VII, p. 152.

19. V.I. Vol. I, p. 310.

20. V.I. Vol. I, p. 504.

21. V.I. Vol. I, p. 314.

22. V.I. Vol. I, p. 317.

23. V.I. II, p. 244.

24. V.I. Vol. I, p. 385.

duvoyu), where they are said to have been destroyed in large numbers along with their chief (VII.18.12, *anu druhyum ni vṛṇag vajrabāhuḥ*).

ANUS :²⁵

At V.31.4,²⁶ they are said to be preparing the chariot of Indra along with Tvaṣṭṛ who fashioned his bow. At VIII.4.1, Indra is said to be residing with Anus and Turvaśa. Agni is said to belong to Anus at VIII.74.4. Along with Druhyus (VII.18.14), they have suffered heavily in the Dāśarājña battle. At VIII.74.2 Śrutarvan,²⁷ is said to be worshipping the fire of the Anus. He is said to be 'ārksa'. Thus Ṛkṣa, Ārkṣa, Śrutarvan and Āśvamedha,²⁸ may be all persons belonging to the family of the Anus, confirming their sacrificial traditions.

PŪRUS :²⁹

The race of the Pūrus apparently was known as a powerful race as its strength is particularly requested by a poet at VI.46.8 (*yad vā ṛkṣau maghavan druhyāvā jane yat pūrau kacca vṛṣṇyam | asmaḥbyam tad ririhi ||*). Whether it was due to sacrificial traditions or not, the close association with sacrifice is, as in the case of Turvaśa,³⁰ ironically indicated at VII.18.13 (*jeṣma pūrum vidathe mṛdhravācam*), where the poet is emphasizing how the sacrificial invocations of Pūrus would be futile in comparison with those of Vasiṣṭha. It is thus that his priestly service would be fruitful as against that of the priest of the Pūrus (VII.83.4, *satyā...purohitiḥ*).

This sacrificial association of the Pūrus is amply substantiated by references to a number of persons of that family, though some of them are described as having suffered on account of wrong political alliances. For their connection with some form of fire-ritual cf. I.59.6, V.17.1, VII.5.3 and X.4.1.

They are associated with Indra worship as well, as indicated at I.131.4, IV.21.10, VI.20.10, X.48.5.

They are said to be residing on the banks of Saraswatī, well-known for sacrificial activity (VII.96.2). On the strength of VIII.64.10-11, they are believed to be residing on the Śaryanāvāt,³¹ which again is imagined to be a portion of Saraswatī.³²

25. V. I. Vol. I, p. 22.

26. Sāy. takes them to be 'Rbhus'; but they have fashioned the chariot of Āśvins (Vide my paper in B.U.J. 1952).

27. See below.

28. said to be ārkṣa at VIII.68.16.

29. V.I. Vol. II p. 11.

30. VII.18.6 see above.

31. V.I. Vol. II, p. 12; for various views see V.I. Vol. II, p. 364.

32. For Oldenberg's view regarding the merger of Pūrus with Kurus, cf. 'Buddha'

Two generations of Pūrus,³³ sacrificing to Indra have been referred to. Thus Purukutsa is said to be receiving help from Indra at I.63.7, 174.2 and VI.20.10. Aśvins are said to be helping him (I.112.7, 14). His son Trasadasyu is associated with the worship of Dyāvāprthivī (IV.38.1), Indra (VII.19.3), Aśvins (VIII.8.21, 36.7). His mother is said to have received him as her son on account of Indra-worship (IV.42.9). He appears to be a very keen sacrificer from the mention of Agni as 'Trāsadasyava samrāt' (VIII.19.32) and from a Dānastuti in his honour at V.33.8, 9 by a member of Atri family. Another one in his honour by Sobhari of the Kaṇva family is referred to at VIII.19.36, where he is described as the most liberal (mañhiṣṭha) person.

In course of time Trasadasyu appears to have become a family name as Tryaruṇa is referred to accordingly at V.27.3. Tryaruṇa, possibly a son of Trivṛṣṇa (1cd.) is being praised for a sacrificial gift at V.27.1-3, where he is said to be receiving Agni's favour for the ninth time (v.3ab, evā ta agne sumatim cakāno naviṣṭhāya navamaṁ trasadasyuh).

Trkṣi³⁴ belonging to Trasadasyu's family is referred to as winning gifts from Aśvins, indicating the continuation of the sacrificial tradition (VIII.22.7.....trkṣim.....trāsadasyavaṁ.....jinvaṭhaḥ).

Kuruśravaṇa³⁵ is referred to as belonging to the family of Trasadasyu (X.33.4). He is said to be 'mañhiṣṭha' like Trasadasyu at VIII.19.36. His gifts are referred to at X.32.9. It is not quite clear how Trkṣi and Kuruśravaṇa were related together as well as with Trasadasyu. The vague mention may indicate that they were very much later than him. Upamaśravas³⁶ is mentioned as the son of Kuruśravaṇa (X.33.6) and the grandson of Mitrātithi (X.33.7).

Still another king in the Pūru family carrying on the sacrificial traditions is referred to at VIII.50.5 as Paura.³⁷ Indra is said to be having a fancy for the invocation of Paura in a soma sacrifice (some svadhvare...paure chandayase havam). He is similarly associated with Aśvin worship at V.74.4. The reference to 'Paurāsaḥ' at VIII.54.1) carrying on Indra worship possibly indicates how the later members came to be recognised by his name, his having been an illustrious member of the family.

ŚIṢṬAS :³⁸

It appears to be a small clan which had distinguished itself in

33. For two other possible ancestors, cf. V.I. I p. 327.

34. V.I. I, p. 319.

35. V.I. I, p. 170; Brhad VIII. 35-6.

36. V.I. I p. 93.

37. V.I. II p. 26.

38. V.I. II p. 383.

soma sacrifices (VIII.53.4).³⁹

CEDIS :⁴⁰

This small clan along with their chief Kaśu⁴¹ has been referred to at VIII.5.37-39. They are referred to as a powerful people, who subdued the ten kings⁴² (v.38). They are said to be unique in their ways (mākireṇā pathā gād yeneme yanti cedayaḥ |). Their liberal gift is also referred to (śatamuṣṭrāṇāḥ dadat sahasrā daśa gonām).

SRŪJAYAS :⁴³

This is another ancient family with a sacrificial tradition. At IV.15.4 (ayaṁ yaḥ sṛñjaye puro daivavāte samidhyate), where Daivavāta of the Sṛñjaya family is said to have kindled sacrificial fire in old days. It is possible that he was a son of Devavāta of the Bharata family (see above) who was known for his Agni worship. His name seems to be Sṛñjaya which later on came to be known as the name of the family (cf. Trasadasyu above). Kumāra Sāhadeva,⁴⁴ who is mentioned in a dānastuti in the same hymn (IV.15.7.10) almost certainly belongs to that family. Daivavāta is also referred to in a dānastuti at VI.27.7, where Indra is said to have helped him against Turvaśa and Vṛcivats.⁴⁵ Another king of the same family Prastoka⁴⁶ is praised in a dānastuti at VI.47.22-25 (prastoka it.; bharadvājān sārñjayo abhyayaṣṭa). According to Hillebrandt⁴⁷ Vitahavya mentioned at VI.15.2, 3; VII.19.3 is also a member of the Sṛñjaya family.

RUŚAMA :

This is the name of another sacrificing family referred to in a dānastuti at V.30.12-15,⁴⁸ where they are said to be offering strong soma juice to Indra (v.13). Their king Rṇamcaya⁴⁹ is referred to (v.12, 14, rṇamcaye rājani ruśamānām). The word 'ruśama' is used in singular at VIII.3.12, 4.2, 51.9, indicating either the founder of the family or the family itself. At VIII.3.12, Indra is said to be helping him. At VIII.4.2 (indra mādayase), their soma-sacrifice is referred to. Their family priest was Babhru (V.30.11).⁵⁰

39. Śiṣṭeṣu citte madirāso amśavo yatra somasya tṛmpasi.

40. V.I. I p. 263.

41. V.I. I p. 144.

42. They are apparently different from those of the famous Dāśarājña battle. Possibly the opponents were similarly confederated against Kaśu.

43. V.I. II. 469-71; Buddha-405.

44. V.I. II. p. 479.

45. See Abhyāvartī below.

46. V.I. II p. 43.

47. VMH I p. 105; V.I. II.316-7.

48. Vide Chapter XI.

49. V.I. I p. 110.

50. Vide Chapter VII, p. 146.

NAHUṢAS :⁵¹

The tribe is mentioned along with the 'pañca kṣitis' at VI.46.7, indicating its ancient tradition. Agni is said to be kindled for him at I.31.11 and adored by the tribe (X.80.6). Their association with Saraswatī is indicated at VII.95.2 and with soma and sacrifice at IX.88.2, 91.2; VIII.46.27.

Besides these families occasional mention is made of a number of other individuals who have rendered some conspicuous service to the cause of the sacrifice.

ATITHIGVA :⁵²

He is referred to as giving gifts in a sacrifice along with his son Indrota (VIII.68.15, 17). According to Sāy. on VIII.68.14, they are giving gifts being inspired to do so when they attended the sacrificial session of Ṛkṣa and Aśvamedha.

ABHYĀVARTI CYĀYAMĀNA :⁵³

At VI.27.5, 8, he is said to be helped by Indra and is referred to in a dānastuti of Daivavāta of the Srñjaya family, with whom possibly he is identical.

AŚVATHA :⁵⁴

He is said to have given a gift to Pāyu at VI.47.24. He need not be considered as identical with Divodāsa and Prastoka as Griffith⁵⁵ imagines.

AŚVAMEDHA :⁵⁶

He is referred to at V.27.4.6 in a dānastuti in his honour, where he is said to have performed a soma-sacrifice in honour of Indra and Agni (vv.5, 6) cf. Ṛkṣa, Ārkṣa and Pūtakratu below.

ASAMĀTI :⁵⁷

He is probably a king of Rathaprosṭha family, said to have been helped by Indra against Bhajeratha (X.60.2), to gain political power (kṣatrā X.60.5), though Macdonell construes the word merely as an adjective.

INDROTA :

See Atithigva above.

51. V.I. I p. 438.

52. V.I. I p. 15; Vel. B.U.J. XV 1948 p. 25 f.n. and Vol. XXI, 1952 p. 18 f.n.

53. V.I. I.29; 260.

54. V.I. I p. 44.

55. HRG Vol. I p. 611 f.n.

56. V.I. I pp. 44, 69; Anuk, considers him as a member of the Bharata family.

57. V.I. I pp. 46-7.

UKṢAṆYĀYANA :⁵⁸

At VIII.25.22-25, he is mentioned as giving a gift along with Suṣāman and Harayāna, who need not be considered as identical merely by the fact of their reference in a 'dānastuti'. Thus in v.22, Ukṣaṇyāyana is said to have given a bay horse, Harayāna, a white horse and Suṣāman, a chariot. And then in the following two verses, the horses with a chariot are glorified. The word 'viprā' (v.24) need not be considered as used with an irony as Griffith⁵⁹ imagines but as referring to two attendants. It may be noted that the chariot is referred to as 'yukta' (v.22). Thus the three need not be considered as identical particularly as they are mentioned separately with different gifts. The phenomenon of different persons giving gifts in the same sacrifice is a pretty common one (cf. VIII.68.14-19). It appears to be due to the fact that certain victories were won jointly and hence the sacrificial performance would also be a joint one. It is also possible that some petty patrons would be coming together for a bigger performance which would be possible by their joint effort.

ŪRJANYA :⁶⁰

As Sāy. construes, this is possibly the name of a sacrificing prince at V.41.20 though it is construed as an adjective by Roth.

ṚKṢA AND ĀRKṢA :⁶¹

Along with the gifts of other patrons, the son of Ṛkṣa (VIII.68.15), is said to have given gifts of horses. At VIII.68.16 Āśvamedha is referred to as Ārkṣa possibly indicating that he is identical with the son of Ṛkṣa, referred to in v.15. In that case he may be different from a person of the name referred to at V.27.4-6 (see above). At VIII.74.13 Śrutarvan is also referred to as Ārkṣa, indicating that he is perhaps the brother of Āśvamedha referred to at VIII.68.16 or perhaps by the time the name of Ṛkṣa had come to be associated with a family and all subsequent persons were referring to themselves of 'Ārkṣa'. Śrutarvan Ārkṣa appears to be residing on the banks of Paruṣṇī (cf. VIII.74.15). For their possible connection with the family of Anus, see above (under 'Anus').

ṚJIṢVAN :⁶²

At IV.16.13 and V.29.11, he is referred to as a descendant of Vidathin. He is said to be a liberal sacrificer at VI.20.7. He is mentioned along with a number of persons who gained at the hands of Indra, among whom Trasadasyu is one (VIII.49.10) and as such

58. V.I. p. 83.

59. HRG Vol. p. 161 f.n.

60. V.I. I p. 105.

61. V.I. I p. 107.

62. V.I. Vol. I, p. 108; for Vaidathina, Vol. II, p. 329.

appears to be known as a soma-sacrificer. This is confirmed by V.29.11 (ā avāmṛjiṣvā sakhyāya cakre pacanpaktirapibaḥ somam-asya |), where he is said to have offered oblations and pressed out the soma-juice.

KUṆḌAPĀYYA :⁶³

At VIII.17.13 it may be the name of ancient soma-sacrificer as indicated by the pressing of the soma-juice, referred to in v.12.

KURUṆGA :⁶⁴

He is said to have given an attractive gift in diviṣṭi sacrifices⁶⁵ at VIII.4.19, which is said to be characteristic even in comparison with that of the Turvaśas. (turvaśeṣu amanmahi).

KṚPA :⁶⁶

Along with Ruma, Ruśama Śyāvaka, he is mentioned as offering sacrifice to Indra at VIII.4.2 and as such requests help from him (IV.3.12, śagdhi kṛpaṁ).

CITRA :⁶⁷

It is not clear how Bṛhad has arrived at the story of Citra being the king of rats. The description at VIII.21.17-18 appears to be quite a normal one as that of a prince as far as the R̥gveda is concerned. It is a dānastuti in his honour. Indra-worship has helped him in gaining a victory and he appears to be celebrating it on the banks of the river Saraswatī as indicated at VIII.21.17 (indro vā ghedīyanmaghaṁ saraswatī vā subhagā dadirvasu | tvaṁ vā citra dāsuṣe) where the gift is referred to as capable of being given by Indra, Saraswatī or Citra. The gift is almost a shower of wealth (parjanya it tatanad hi vṛṣṭyā) as he gave in thousands (sahasramayutā dadat). On account of such an outstanding gift, other princes are said to be appearing quite diminutive in comparison with him (v.18, citra id rājā rājaka idanyake yake saraswatīmanu |).

CYAVATĀNA :⁶⁸

At V.33.9, the sacrificial gift of Cyavatāna is referred to as indicated by reference to that of Mārutāśva earlier as 'vidathasya rāti' (33.9b). Perhaps he may be identical with the latter as Macdonell suggests. He is mentioned in the hymn along with Trasadasyu and Dhvanya with their separate gifts.

63. V.I. I p. 161; Sāy. does not consider the word to be the name of a sacrificer.

64. V.I. I p. 170.

65. cf. Chapter VI p. 128.

66. V.I. I p. 179.

67. V.I. I 261; Bṛhad. VI.61.

68. V.I. I p. 264.

TARANTA :⁶⁹

At V.61.10, as a son of Vidadaśva (Vaidadaśvin),⁷⁰ he is said to have given a gift of a hundred cows.

TARUKṢA :⁷¹

He is mentioned along with Dāsa Balbūtha in a dānastuti at VIII.46.32. Perhaps he was also a Dāsa and as such a convert to the cult of the sacrifice.

TIRINDARA⁷² AND PARŚU :⁷³

See Yadus above and the dānastuti at VIII.6.46-48 in Chapter XI.

TŪRVAYĀṆA :⁷⁴

At I.53.10 and VI.18.13, Indra is said to have helped him. At X.61.1 (parṣat pakthe), the Pakthas are said to have been helped and at v.2, Turvayāṇa is said to have offered ample soma-juice. Cyavāna,⁷⁵ the priest of another patron had fairly advanced preparations for sacrifice to Indra (v.2, cyavānaḥ sūdairamimita vedim). Indra however is said to have driven away the priests (v.1, ahannā sapta hotṛn), as the offering of Cyavāna was deceptive (v.2, sa id dānāya dabhyāya vanvan). This indicates how mere show was not tolerated for sacrifices and the success of the performance was determined on quantitative grounds as indicated by almost a shower of soma-juice on the part of Cyavāna.

TRṆASKANDA :⁷⁶

He is said to be helped by Maruts, along with his subjects at I.172.3.

DABHĪTI :⁷⁷

He is said to have received help from Indra against Dasyus and Dāsas (II.13.9; IV.30.21), apparently by sacrificial performances referred to at VI.20.13 (...somebhiḥ sunvan dabhitiridhmabhrtiḥ pakthyarkaiḥ), with soma-juice and cooked food. He need not be considered to be a priest by a reference to hymns at VI.20.13. If there was a patron, the occasion required his mention and so the conjecture does not appear to be justified.

69. V.I. I p. 300.

70. V.I. II p. 329.

71. V.I. I p. 300.

72. V.I. p. 310.

73. op. cit. p. 504.

74. op. cit. p. 319.

75. V.I. I pp. 264-5.

76. op. cit. p. 320.

77. op. cit. pp. 339-40.

DASYAVE VRKA :⁷⁸

As a patron of sacrifice, he is said to have given sumptuous gifts to a member of the Kaṇva family in VIII.55 and 56. At VIII.51.2, the name refers to a priest who won a thousand cows apparently as a gift from his patron. It appears that the name Dasyavevrka (a wolf to dasyus) was coined for a patron and later his priest-poet also came to be designated accordingly. This appears to have happened as in the case of 'Trtsus', where the word is applied to both the Vasiṣṭhas as well as their patrons in the R̥gveda.⁷⁹

DUḤSĪMA :⁸⁰

He is referred to in a dānastuti at X.93.14-15, along with Prthavāna, Vena and Māyava Rāma about whom nothing is known except that they declare their gift jointly. This is another illustration of a joint sacrifice by a number of petty chiefs.

DHVANYA :⁸¹

Along with Trasadasyu and Cyavatāna, Dhvanya, the son of Lakṣmaṇa is said to be separately giving his gifts at V.33.10, with Samvaraṇa as their priest.⁸²

DHVASRA :⁸³

Along with Puruṣanti (see below) he is referred to as giving gifts to the poet of IX.58 and his family.

NĀRYA :⁸⁴

He is said to be a soma-sacrificer and glorified in a dānastuti at VIII.24.29-30. He is said to have given gifts to Vyaśvas⁸⁵ for their priestly service. He is said to have flourished on the banks of the river Gomati⁸⁶ at VIII.24.30.

PĀKASTHĀMAN :⁸⁷

He has been praised in a dānastuti at VIII.3.21-24. He was the son of Kuruyāna (v.21). His liberality is praised in an interesting metaphor.⁸⁸ It was apparently a soma-sacrifice that he performed in honour of Indra. But no other details are available.

78. V.I. I p. 346; Geldner II p. 373; 377-8; Vide Chapter XI under 'dānastutis'.

79. Thus the word refers to Vasiṣṭhas at VII.83.4 satyā trtsūnāmabhavat purohitiḥ; the word refers to Bharatas at VII.33.5, 6 and VII.83.6. For various views regarding Trtsus—Cf. V.I. I pp. 320-23.

80. V.I. I p. 371.

81. op. cit. p. 406.

82. Vide Chapter VII. p. 159.

83. V.I. I p. 407.

84. V.I. I p. 447.

85. Vide Chapter VII. p. 158.

86. Vide Chapter IV. p. 65.

87. V.I. I p. 514.

88. For explanation, cf. Chapter XI 'dānastutis'.

PĀRĀVATA :⁸⁹

At VIII.34.18 the gifts of Pārāvata (rātiṣu dravaccakreṣu āśuṣu) are referred to. The word may refer to a person of the name or even a group of people (VIII.100.6). At VI.61.2, they are said to be punished by Saraswatī.

PURAYAḤ :⁹⁰

He is mentioned as a liberal donor at VI.63.9-10 along with the following, about none of whom any information is available elsewhere. (1) Purupantha⁹¹ (2) Peruka⁹² (3) Śāṇḍa⁹³ (4) Sumīḷha⁹⁴

PURUMĪḤA :⁹⁵

At V. 61.9-10 he appears as a patron along with Taranta, who has given gifts to Śyāvāśva of the Atri family. He is said to be a soma-sacrificer at I.151.2 (sominah). At I.183.5, he is mentioned along with Gotama and Atri and hence construed as a priest.⁹⁶ It should however be noted that he may be mentioned along with the two priestly families as their patron. The nyāya applied to consider him a priest is 'saṁdamśa-nyāya'; it should rather be 'dehalidīpa-nyāya', indicating his patronage to both the families. His liberality is indicated at VIII.71.14 (agnīm rāye purumīḷha śrutam nara'gnīm sudītaye cchardih) where he is said to be addressed along with Agni and other men for wealth.

PURUṢANTI :⁹⁷

Along with Dhvasra, he is said to have given sacrificial gifts at IX.58.3. At I.112.23, he is mentioned as protected by Aśvins and hence like a number of others, who are said to be worshipping Indra and Aśvins, he too appears to be a soma-sacrificer.

PŪTAKRATU :⁹⁸

He is said to have given gifts and is referred to in a dānastuti at VIII.68.17 along with Indrota and Ārkṣa.

PRTHAVĀNA :⁹⁹

At X.93.14, he is mentioned along with Duḥśīma, Vena and Rāma. cf. Duḥśīma above.

89. V.I. I p. 518; VMH Vol. I 97; Vel. B.U.J. XV 1946; VMH I. 97. cf. also Vasurocis below.

90. V.I. I p. 540.

91. op. cit. p. 543.

92. V.I. Vol. II, p. 22.

93. op. cit. p. 371.

94. op. cit. p. 457.

95. V.I. Vol. Vol. I, p. 543.

96. HRG I. 247.

97. V.I. II p. 2.

98. op. cit. p. 10; 'Aśvamedha' above.

99. op. cit. p. 15.

PRTHUŚRAVAS KĀNĪTA :¹⁰⁰

The poet Vaśa Aśvya is said to have received a gift from Prthuśravas at I.116.21 in an Aśvin worship and at VIII.46.21 in an Indra worship. As referred to at both the places (I.116.21, ekasyā vastoravataṁ....and VIII.46.21....asyā vyusyādade), the gifts were received in the morning, indicating perhaps a convention of holding such rites in the morning. His liberality is referred to at VIII.46.24.

PRDĀKUSĀNU :¹⁰¹

At VIII.17.15, he is said to be superior to many (abhi bhūyasaḥ) though alone (ekaḥ san) and asked to bring Indra for a drink of soma (somasya pītaye) indicating his soma-sacrifices.

PRĀTARDANI :¹⁰²

At VI.26.8, a descendant of Pratardana is associated with a sacrificial invocation for royal glory (asyāṁ dyumnaḥūtau..... kṣatraśrīrastu |).

PRIYARATHA :¹⁰³

See Śrutaratha below.

RATHAVĪTĪ DĀRBHYA :¹⁰⁴

He is glorified by the poet Śyāvāśva of the Atri family at V. 61.17-19. He appears to be a leader of a tribe, residing in far-off regions in the mountain (v.19, parvateṣu apaśritaḥ). The poet is so very attached to him (v.8, na kāmo apa veti me) because of the soma sacrifices that he has undertaken (v.18b).

RĀMA :¹⁰⁵

See Duḥśīma above.

VASUROCIS :¹⁰⁶

He appears to be a person belonging to Pārāvata family, who has made some gifts in a sacrifice (VIII.34.16). Taking into consideration the fact that Pārāvatas were possibly obstacles in the way of sacrifice, as Sarasvatī is said to have struck them down (VI.61.2, 'pārāvataḥgnīm'), this would be an illustration of an individual from a non-sacrificing tribe converted to the cult of sacrifice.

100. op. cit. p. 17.

101. V.I. II p. 18; Vel. B.U.J. XIV 1945 p. 23 contrues the word as equivalent to Agni.

102. V.I. II p. 49.

103. op. cit. p. 52.

104. V.I. II p. 206; Sāy. quoting Brhad; V.H. Part I S.B.E. 32. pp. 359. 362.

105. V.I. II p. 222.

106. op. cit. p. 277; and Pārāvata above.

VENA :¹⁰⁷

He is referred to in a *dānastuti* (X.93.14). cf. *Duṣśīma* above.

SATRI :¹⁰⁸

From the way he is glorified at V.34.9 (*sahasrasāmagniveśīm gr̥ṇīṣe śatrimagna upamām ketumaryaḥ | tasmā āpaḥ saṁyataḥ pipayanta tasmin kṣatramamavat tveṣamastu ||*), he appears to be a very keen sacrificer. It appears that by the time, political power was associated with encouragement to sacrifice as it was attained with the help of sacrifice and hence the request of the poet for a bright and powerful dominion for him (*tveṣamamavat kṣatram*). Śatri belonged to Agniveśa family and apparently for his gifts in sacrifices, he is being referred to as 'aryaḥ ketu'. The glorifying epithet is significant inasmuch as the performance of sacrifices has come to be considered as the standard for Aryan behaviour indicating the influence of sacrifice on social ideals of the time.

ŚARA :¹⁰⁹

He is referred to as a liberal patron (*bhojaḥ sūriḥ*) in a *dānastuti* at VIII.70.13-15. Macdonell along with Pischel considers this to be an ironical *dānastuti* inasmuch as one calf is said to be given to three priests. It appears however that a little misunderstanding of the meaning has caused this impression. Ordinarily we cannot expect an ironical reference in a *dānastuti*. *Dānastutis*¹¹⁰ were apparently written at the time of celebrating a victory attained by the help of the divinity. Very possibly the gift was made known after the hymn was composed for the occasion and hence ordinarily the 'stuti' occurs at the end.

If under such circumstances, Śara belonging to Śūradeva's family has given his gift, it cannot be as miserable as it is made out to be, because in that case the poet would not have been as enthusiastic in his description of the patron as he appears to be at VIII.70.13 (*sakhāyaḥ kratumicchata kathā rādhāma śarasya | upastutim bhojaḥ sūriyo ahrayaḥ ||*), where he says that he cannot adequately praise his patron's liberality and prowess. In the following stanza (14ab, *bhūribhiḥ samaha ṛṣibhirbarhiṣmadbhiḥ samidhyase*), he is said to be praised by a number of sacrificing priests, which would not be possible if the person was so miserly. He is said to give the gift of a number of calves (14cd, *yaditthamekamekamicchara vatsān parāda-daḥ |*) at the rate of one to each, the idea being that the patron himself was handing over the calves one by one. The same fact is graphi-

107. V.I. II p. 325.

108. op. cit. p. 352.

109. V.I. II p. 357, Ved. Stu. I.5-7; Vel. B.U.J. 1946 p. 28 f.n.

110. Vide remarks in Chapter XI under 'Dānastuti'.

cally described in v.15 (karnagrhyā maghavā śauradevyo vatsām nāstribhya ānayāt). The word 'vatsa' in the singular need not be made much of in view of the plural 'vatsān' in v.14. The significance of 'karnagrhyā' appears to be that the patron himself was doing honour to the priest by picking up the calf or calves in the same manner for these three priests. It is the sentiment that the poet is appreciating though the gift may not be so sumptuous as some other gifts. It may be noted that it is in this strain that even the gift of four horses is referred to as a 'unique gift' at VIII.74.15 (cf. nemāpo āśvadātaraḥ śaviṣṭhādasti martyaḥ).

ŚYĀVA :¹¹¹

He is referred to in a dānastuti at VIII.19.37 as sacrificer on the banks of the river Suvāstu. He may be the same as Śyāvaka who is referred to along with Kṛpa (see above) etc. (VIII.3.12; 4.2).¹¹²

ŚRUTARVAN :¹¹³

Indra is said to have helped him in defeating his opponent Mrgaya at X. 49.5. He is mentioned for his association with Agni ritual at VIII.74.4 (yasya śrutarvā...anika edhate) and is praised for a gift at VIII.74.13.

Śaviṣṭha referred to at VIII.74.14, 15 may be understood as identical with Śrutarvan, particularly as the gift of Śaviṣṭha as well as of Śrutarvan (1.13, śirṣā caturṇām; v.14 catvāra āśavaḥ) is of four horses only. He is said to be a unique donor (v.15, quoted under Śara).

ŚRUTARATHA :¹¹⁴

At V.36.6, he is praised in a dānastuti as a youthful king, fit to be bowed down to (kṣitayo namantām) by the people. At I.122.7, he is mentioned along with Priyaratha as a patron of the priestly family of the Pajras, giving them all nourishment.

ŚVAITREYA :¹¹⁵

At I.33.14, Indra is said to have helped him for a glorious victory. He may be identical with Śvitra mentioned in the following stanza. At V.19.3, he is referred to as prospering along with his people obviously on account of the performances of soma sacrifices for them by Bṛhaduktha of the Atri family. He appears to have given

111. V.I. II p. 399.

112. Śyāva and Śyāvāśva cf. I.117.24, V.61.9, X. 65.2 appear to be different.

113. op cit. p. 403; cf. also 'Anus', 'Ārkṣa' and 'Āśvamedha' above.

114. V.I. Vol. II p. 402.

115. op. cit. p. 410.

gifts of a golden necklace to the priest as the epithet 'niṣkagrīva' would indicate, apparently for his sacrificial service.

SĀVARṆĠ OR SĀVARṆYA :¹¹⁶

In glorifying the gift of this almost a mythical being at X.62.9 (sāvarṇyasya dakṣiṇā vi sindhuriva paprathe) and 62.11 (sahasradā grāmanīrmā riṣanmanuḥ sūryeṇāsya yatamānaitu dakṣiṇā), it seems that the poet is either visualising him as a sacrificer or is seeking to glorify the importance of the sacrifice by his imaginative statement, indicating thereby also the very ancient origin of the system of sacrifice.

SUNĠTHA — ŚAUCADRATHA :¹¹⁷

Along with a number of other worshippers of Uṣas, he is referred to at V.79.2.

SUṢĀMAN :¹¹⁸

He is mentioned in a dānastuti along with Ukṣaṇyāyana and Harayāṇa at VIII.25.22 (see above). At VIII.60.18 (ketena śarman sacate suṣāmaṇi), the reference may be to the same person as Macdonell thinks or even it may have been used just in a derivative sense. At VIII.23.28, 24.28, 26.2, the word 'varo' precedes it as a separate word. Padapāṭha shows it separately and Sāy. construes it as vocative of Varu, which he considers to be the name of the king at two of these places. At VIII.23.28, he construes it as an epithet of Agni. Sāyaṇa's explanation is apparently a conjectural one, particularly not fitting at VIII.26.2, where Varu and Aśvinā will have to be construed as addressed in the same stanza. Against the evidence of Padapāṭha, Ludwig considers it to be one word indicating the same 'Suṣāman'. It is possible that they are identical particularly as they are referred to in the hymns of the same poet Viśvamanas and nothing is known about Varu from elsewhere.

SVANAYA BHĀVYA :¹¹⁹

At I.126.1, the king Bhāvyā is known as residing on the banks of the river Sindhu and executing the performance of a thousand 'savas'¹²⁰ (amandān tsoṃān pra bhave maṇiṣā sindhāvadhī kṣiyato bhāvyasya | yo me sahasramamimīta savānatūrto rājā śrava icchamānaḥ). From the statement that he was desirous of fame, it would appear that such longer performances were thought of as giving

116. V.I. II. p. 448.

117. op. cit. pp. 395, 455.

118. op. cit. p. 460; HRG Vol. II, p. 156; Sāy. construes the word as a name only at VIII 24.28; 26.2.

119. Nī. IX.10; V.I. II. p. 103.

120. cf. 'Sahasrasāva' in Chapter VI. The rite referred to here appears to be a similar one.

fame. He is referred to as 'Svanaya' at I.126.3 and also praised for a gift in I.125. This gift is said to be given in the morning (prātā ratnam prātaritvā dadhāti) indicating that such performances were held in the morning (see above).

SVARṆARA :¹²¹

He is mentioned along with Ruśama etc. at VIII.3.12 as helped by Indra. At VIII.12.2 also the same person appears to be referred to. At a number of other passages, however, the word is apparently used in a different sense.¹²² Geldner takes it to mean a lake, the region whereof was associated with soma-pressing. At V.18.5, a gift is praised by a poet of Atri family; it may be that of this Svarṇara.

It is interesting to note the ways in which the poets refer to their patrons very frequently even without the idea of praising them in view. As the sacrificers were moving under close observation of the poets of the various hymns, they come to be associated with certain functions connected with the sacrifice.

Thus with the general performance in view, they are referred to as 'yajamāna' (I.127.2, etc.); 'ijāna' (I.125.4), 'yakṣyamāna' (I.125.4), 'yajvan' (II.26.1), 'prayakṣan' (I.132.5), 'yajyu' (I.55.6), 'prayajyu' (I.180.2), 'yaṣtu' (I.13.6) etc. Gods are said to be helpful to them (VI.28.2) and prospering them (X.26.8, VIII.12.18). Earlier sacrificers are said to be dearer to the gods (V.77.2, pūrvaḥ pūrvo yajamāno vaniyan). Aryan sacrificers are sharply contrasted with non-Aryan non-sacrificers at I.130.8 (indrah samatsu yajamāna-māryam prāvad viśveṣu śatamūtirājiṣu svarmilheṣvavājiṣu | manave śāsadavratān tvacam kṛṣṇāmarandhayat ||) where Indra is said to have crushed the non-sacrificers, in helping the noble sacrificers. Uśas is said to be awakening the sacrificers (I.113.9, yakṣyamānāñ ajīgaḥ |).

For purposes of sacrifices, the sacrificers used to work hard. This is indicated by their being called 'śāsamāna' (I.85.12, IV.2.13 etc). For undertaking the sacrificial performance, they are called 'ṛtaṁ yat' (IX.69.3, 74.3, etc.). With preparation for sacrifice in view, a sacrificer is called 'subarhis' (I.74.5). For carrying it through perfectly, 'svadhvara' (VIII.5.33). With the gifts to gods in general in the sacrifices and those to the priests for the performances in view, he is variously referred to as 'prayasvat' (IV.41.2), 'suprayas' (IV.41.3), 'dāsvat' (II.4.3), 'dāśvas' (I.35.8), 'dadāśvas' (I.166.3). With preparations of the offerings in view, he is called 'pacat' (V.29.11)

121. V.I. II p. 495.

122. IV.21.3, V.18.4, VIII.6.39 etc.

'sunvat' etc.; with the equipment in the place of sacrifice in view, he is called 'haviṣmat' (VIII.6.27); with the offerings that have been offered in view, he is said to be 'rātahavya' (VII.19.6), 'rātahaviḥ' (II.34.8), 'havirdā' (I.153.3).

Soma being the most popular of all the offerings has given a good many epithets to gods (vide Chapter III) as also the sacrificers. Thus with the arrangement of the pressing stones in view, the sacrificer is called 'yuktagrāvan' (II.12.6); with the actual pressing in view, he is called 'somasutvā' (I.113.18), sunvat (VIII.97.2), sunvāna (VIII.80.3); with the pressing process completed in view, 'sutavān' (VIII.97.4) or 'sutasoma' (I.142.1, X.28.2). With the custom of drinking the soma-juice in view, he is called 'sutapāḥ' (I.155.2). With the general soma-sacrifice in view, he is called 'somin' (I.49.1, X.44.5).

His liberality in both undertaking the sacrifices and executing them efficiently found expression by his being designated as 'prayata-dakṣiṇa' (I.31.5), 'bhoja yajvan' (I.151.2, 3, etc.).

It appears that patrons used to vie with each other in giving gifts to the priests and in general celebrating the performance on a generous scale, as that came to be considered to be the measure of reputation at the time (cf. VII.16.10, ye rādhāṁsi dadatyaśvya maghā kāmēna śravaso mahāḥ |). It is this liberality which makes both the patrons as well as Indra get the epithet 'maghavat'. It is thus that the 'dakṣiṇā' given by the patrons, comes to be associated with Indra in a glorified form (VII.27.4, anūnā yasya dakṣiṇā pīpāya vāman nṛbhyo abhivita sakhibhyaḥ) and Indra comes to be referred to as 'dakṣiṇāvān' (III.39.6, IX.98.10). The generosity of the patrons in helping the sacrificial performances was glorified in such a way that it should be helpful in general to the growth of the sacrifice (VIII.5.6, tā sudevāya dāśuṣe sumedhānavitāriṇīm | ghṛtairgavyūti-mukṣatām), where the poet is asking for a wide pasture-land for the patron, which would lead to the performances of more sacrifices (indicated by 'sumedhā').

Gods are also said to be treating them in a reciprocatingly considerate manner and being extremely generous to them. Thus Indra is said to be a liberal giver to those liberal patrons at VIII.88.6 (nakīḥ pariṣṭirmaghavan maghasya te yaddāśuṣe dāśasyasi) and at X.42.8 (nāha dāmānam maghavā niyāmsanni sunvate vahati bhūri vāman), where Indra is said to be giving without any restriction on himself.

Patrons are in this way not only helpful to the priests with the prosperity attained through the sacrifices but also to the gods

through whose favour the prosperity is attained. This conception of mutual helpfulness between the divinity and the human beings through the sacrifices can thus be perceived to be the underlying idea of the institution of the sacrifice as it was being developed in the Aryan society. It has thus been emphasized by the author of the Gīta as leading towards social emancipation (III.11, 'devān bhāvayatā...śreyaḥ paramavāpsyatha'). It is explicitly stated in a number of passages in the Ṛgveda.

Thus Indra expresses his desire to help the sacrificers at X.27.1 (asat sū me jaritaḥ sābhivego yat sunvate yajamānāya śikṣam |) and at X.49.1c (aham bhuvaṁ yajamānasya coditā). It is thus that he is said to be contracting friendship with the sacrificer and avoiding that with the non-sacrificer at X.42.4 (atrā yujam kṛṇute yo haviṣmān, nāsunvatā sakhyam vaṣṭi sūrah |).

In this way, we can visualize the very significant part played by the patrons in the growth of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice. The general tone of mutual co-operation, obligation and the consequent quest for prosperity is too obvious to remain unnoticed. Whatever the complications that developed in the social relationship in the later days, they are conspicuous by their absence in the days of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice, where a general feeling of amity and accommodation is clearly perceptible in the expression of the priests about their patrons, towards whom their attitude is one of respectful affection occasionally interspersed with admiration and gratitude.

It is this well-balanced class-consciousness that developed a healthy spirit of mutual co-operation which in its turn paved the way for general prosperity and carried on the system of sacrifice from strength to strength.

Chapter Nine

REACTIONS TO THE GROWTH OF THE SACRIFICE

अपव्रतान् प्रसवे वावृधानान् ब्रह्मद्विषः सूर्याद् यावयस्व । (RV V. 42.9)

पाकत्रा मनसा दीनदक्षा न यज्ञस्य मन्वते मर्तासः । (RV X. 2.5)

SYNOPSIS :—

Opposition countenanced by the growing sacrifice both in physical and ideological spheres—among the former, Paṇis and Dasyus prominent—Paṇis opposed almost en bloc—the reason—their systematic efforts—Br̥bu, a convert—opponents contrasted with sacrificing Aryans—‘anyavarta’, suggestive of some different form of worship—V.20.2—other sections following a different mode of worship—‘apavrata’—V.42.9—some obstructions referred to—practices to undermine established ritual—counteraction through sacrifices—

Challenge to the authority of the divinities—anti-Indra feeling denounced—certain sections against Mitrāvaruṇā cult—‘ayajñāsācaḥ’ at VI.67.9—significance explained—interesting points raised—Analysis of the attitude by the poet of X.2.—

Association of sacrifice with truth, indicating vital importance in the life of the Aryans—word conveying the ideas about non-sacrifices—‘ayajyu’, ‘ayajña’.... etc.—some other non-sacrificers with certain practices without designations—Mūradevas etc. opposed to the R̥gvedic ritual—summing up the indications—

Like all social institutions of importance, sacrifice too had to countenance a good deal of opposition, particularly as it was evolving a new ideology and a set of practices. It was both in physical as well as ideological spheres.

Among those who raised physical obstacles in the way of sacrificial performances, the Paṇis and the Dasyus in general appear to be quite prominent. Whatever their vocation or profession, the Paṇis¹ appear to be opposed to the sacrifice as symbolic of the Aryan way of life, as is indicated at a number of places in the R̥gveda. Thus the Paṇis are expected to be kept asleep as against the sacrificing patrons (I.124.10, prabodhaya uṣaḥ pr̥nato maghoni abudhyamānāḥ paṇayaḥ sasantu; also IV.51.3). Indra is said to be keeping aloof even from the richest of the Paṇis as they would not press out the soma juice (IV.25.7, na revatā paṇinā sakhyamindro’sunvatā sutapāḥ saṃgr̥ṇīte). The sacrificers and the Paṇis are sharply contrasted at VIII.97.2. At X.60.6 (paṇin nyakramīrabhi viśvān rājanarādhasaḥ), it is indicated how the Paṇis were almost en bloc opposed to the sacrifice. Indra is said to be great, particularly as he vanquished them (VIII.64.2). Paṇis are referred to as fools,

braggarts, etc., as they had no faith in the sacrifice and as such were opposed to it at VII.6.3 (nyakratūn grathino mṛdhravācaḥ paṇinraśraddhān avṛdhān ayajñān |). The attempt of the Paṇis to steal away the cows of the gods appears to be a very systematic effort to put obstacles in the way of the sacrificial performances. It is however said to have been frustrated with the help of soma sacrifices at I.93.4 and at X.108.11, where Angirasas are referred to. It is also indicated at VI.51.14 (grāvāṇaḥ soma no hi kaṁ sakhi-tvanāya vāvaśuḥ | jahī yantriṇaṁ paṇim vṛko hi śaḥ), where Soma is asked to put down the wolf-like Paṇis.

It is interesting to note that Bṛbu is praised as a liberal donor at VI.45.33 (bṛbum sahasradātamaṁ sūriṁ sahasrasātamam) and in v.31, he is referred to as the best of the Paṇis (adhi bṛbuḥ paṇinām varṣiṣṭhe mūrdhanyasthāt). This would indicate that the growing cult of sacrifice had converted some of the non-sacrificers to it. It is further supported by the mention of a Dāsa chief called Balbūtha² who is referred to in a Dānastuti at VIII.46.32.

Another important Paṇi to be mentioned is Bṛsaya (I.93.4; VI.61.3), who appears to have a number of followers (bṛsayasya śeṣaḥ). Saraswatī, very closely associated with the Ṛgvedic sacrifice has been asked to put down Bṛsaya and his followers as they were opposed to the Aryan mode of worship as is indicated at VI.61.3 (Saraswati devanido ni barhaya prajāṁ bṛsayasya māyinaḥ).

Dasyus³ appear to be an obstacle in the way of the general progress of the Aryans. In the field of the sacrifice too, they appear to have played their role of opposition. Thus they are contrasted with the Aryans, who scatter the barhis grass in the sacrifice (I.51.8, vijānihi āryān ye ca dasyavaḥ | barhiṣmate randhayā śāsadavratān |). Aryans are said to be getting the better of the Dasyus because of their sacrificial rites (VI.14.3 and IX.41.2). How far a dasyu is away from the sacrificial cult of the Aryans is indicated at VIII.70.11 (anyavratamamānuṣamayajvānamadevayum |), where he has been referred to as 'anyavrata' and hence 'amānuṣa' (inhuman). This is further supported by another passage (X.22.8, akarmā dasyuḥ abhi no amantuḥ anyvrato amānuṣaḥ) where too a different cult of the Dasyus appears to be indicated. His dissociation from the Aryan form of worship is indicated by the word 'akarmā'. This mode of worship is against the Agni worship of the Aryans as is made clear at V.20.2, possibly with a different set of deities to be worshipped as indicated by the epithet 'adevayu' and hence the Dasyus are

2. See Tarukṣa..... Chapter VIII.

3. cf. RRG p. 37; Cf. P. S. Sagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

expected to be put down (tvam tasya vadharjambhaya) as non-sacrificing people (VIII.70.11, ayajvan; VII.6.3, ayajyu).

It was however not only the Dasyus, who had some different observances, but there were some others as well who are referred to as 'apavratas'. Thus, pleading for help to a sacrificer, a poet is emphasizing his point by drawing out contrast between certain pairs at I.51.8 (vijānihyāryān ye ca dasyavo barhiṣmate randhayā śāsada-vratān | śākī bhava yajamānasya coditā ||), where a sacrificer with barhis grass is contrasted with 'avratas'. Similarly in v.9ab (anuvratāya randhayannapavratānābhūbhirindrahśnathayannanābhuvah |) the 'anuvratas' are contrasted with the 'apavratas', who are apparently engaged in different types of worship. At V.40.6, 'apavrata' is used as an adjective of 'tamas' which has concealed the Sun (gūlham sūryam tamasāpavratena turiyeṇa brahmaṇāvindadatriḥ |), who is said to be gained by a hymn associated with a soma sacrifice as indicated in V.40.8 (grāvṇo yuyujānah). 'Tamas' would thus appear to refer to some magical practices as against the sacrificial rites of the Aryans. At V.42.9 (apavratān prasave vāvṛdhānān brahma-dviṣaḥ sūryādyāvayasva ||), it is indicated how the 'apavratas' are against the hymns of the Aryans (brahmadviṣaḥ), though obviously enjoying prosperity on account of certain performances of their own (prasave vāvṛdhānān).

At V.42.10 (ya ohate rakṣaso devavītau acakrebhistam maruto ni yāta | yo vah śamīm śāsamānasya nindāt tucchyān kāmān karate siṣvidānah ||), certain persons who would defile the Aryan rites by bringing in the names of demons therein are referred to. They would be toiling in performances of some rites of theirs (siṣvidānah), though they would revile the efforts of the Aryan worshippers. The very trifling aims that such persons had in view are indicated by 'tucchyān kāmān karate', suggesting how the Aryan sacrificers had nobler motives in their type of worship.

It is with these varying objections to the current ritual in view that Viśvāmitra is expecting the favour of Agni against enmities (III.18.1, purudruho hi kṣitayo janānām | bhavā no agne sumanā upetau |). It is also possible that he has in view certain other Aryan worshippers, who were opposed to his experimentation with new modes of worship.

In general, manifold opposition from varying sources, encountered by the protagonists of the cult of sacrifice is referred to as necessary to be overcome with the divine help at III.24.1 (duṣṭarastarannarātirvarco dhā yajñavāhase).⁴

4. It is adjective of gods at four places IV.47.3; VII.12.20; I.86.2; I.15.11; only here and at III.8.3, it is used with yajamāna, indicating their importance in the sacrifice

Some of these non-sacrificers appear to be challenging the authority of particular divinities or some specific modes of offering worship to them. An interesting way of reviling the divinity was resorted to possibly by some non-Aryans, who would prepare the oblations and then swallow them by themselves. (cf. VII.18.16, *ardham vīrasya śṛtapāmanindram* | ... *parā śardhantaṁ nunude* etc). Such persons are further referred to as 'bāhukṣadaḥ'⁵ at X.27.6 (*darśannvatra śṛtapān anindrān bāhukṣadaḥ śarave patyamānān* |). A more audacious form of such open ridiculing and reviling of the Aryan deities is referred to at I.51.5 (*tvam mājābhiraṇa mājino' dhamāḥ svadhābhīrye adhi śūptāvajuhvata* |), where those persons are said to be invoking Indra and then placing the oblation in their own mouths. This open defiance of certain divinities may be due to mere audacity on the part of the non-sacrificers.⁶ The poet of V.2, remarking that he has already enlisted the help of Agni by offering him unmixed soma-juice talks defiantly about those anti-Indra workers (v.3, *dadāno asmaī amṛtaṁ vipṛkvaṭ kiṁ māmanindrāḥ kṛṇavannanukthāḥ*; also X.48.7, *kiṁ mā nindanti śatravo'nindrāḥ* |), suggesting that their position was weaker as they were not possessed of powerful hymns (*anukthāḥ*). This anti-Indra tendency is expected to be put down by fostering Indra worship as indicated at I.133.1; IV.23.7.

Certain Aryans are also referred to as being against the Indra-worship at X.38.3 (*yo na dāsa āryo vā puruṣtuta | adeva indra yudhaye ciketati*). Godlessness in general is said to be opposition to sacrifice at VII.98.5 (*yadā idadevīrasahiṣṭa mājāḥ athābhavat kevalaḥ somo asya*; cf. also VIII.70.7).

Certain other persons, who are disposed against the worship of Mitrāvaruṇā, are referred to along with similar other persons at VI.67.9 (*Pra yadvān mitrāvaruṇā spūrdhan priyā dhāma yuvadhītā minanti | na ye devāsa ohasā na martāḥ ayajñasāco apyo na putrāḥ* |). those persons are said to be working against Mitrāvaruṇā and violating their laws. Apparently the non-Aryans are not intended by the poet here, as they would never be expected to follow the laws of Mitrāvaruṇā. So some Aryan worshippers, who were against the Mitrāvaruṇā worship have been referred to as indicating their stand. It is not clear as to what shape this violation of laws would take but obviously it would be violation of an aspect or aspects of sacrifice associated with them as would be indicated by their description as 'ayajñasācaḥ'. The word is used only here and as such

5. cf. 'mean offerers'—Griffith II p. 417; Vel. B.U.J. XXI 1952 p. 6 'those (strong enough) to dig with their arms'; Sāy.—'who cut the (worshippers) to pieces with their hands'.

6. whose boastfulness (*vagvanā*) is referred to at X.132.2; cf. 'arādhasaḥ' below.

appears to be specially coined by the poet for the purposes of conveying his particular notion about them.

If they were non-Aryans or Aryans who merely opposed the sacrifice, they could have been dismissed as audacious very easily. But it could not be so easily done. They were not quite ordinary mortals (na martāḥ) and at the same time the poet is reluctant to give them the place of divinity (na ye devāsaḥ ohasā). So in all probability, they were persons who had rendered some signal service to the sacrifice like the R̥bhus and were demanding a place among the divinities side by side with Mitrāvaruṇā but as it was not forthcoming,⁷ they were opposing the claims of Mitrāvaruṇā.

Such persons however were not exceptions as indicated in d, where apyaḥ putrāḥ⁸ are similarly said to be 'ayajñasācaḥ'.

Such opposition used to arise mainly on account of the claims of certain worshippers that their desired divinities were greater than the others as indicated at VI.67.10 (ād vām bravāma satyānyukthā na kirdevabhīryatatho mahitvā |). These rivalries must have given some impetus to the idea of sacrifice but in certain instances like these they must also have been putting obstacles in the way of its growth by raising the number of opponents.

Some of these non-believers in the sacrifice of the Aryan conception appear to raise objections regarding the appearance of the divinity to receive the oblations in the sacrifice. Thus the poet of X.39.5 (purāṇā vām vīryā pra bravā jane) indicates how the non-believers used to consider the descriptions of the poets as fancies of the bygone days and hence to convince them, requests the divinities to appear so that the objectors may believe (tā vām nu navyāvavase karāmahe | ayaṁ nāsatyā śrad ariryāthā dadhat |).

The poet of X.2, analysing the attitude of such non-believers, attributes it to a defect in their power of understanding things. Thus he remarks in v.5 (yat pākatrā manasā dinadakṣā na yajñasya manvate martāsaḥ | agniṣṭad hotā kratuvid vijānan yajīṣṭho devān ṛtuśo yajāti |) that mortals do not take to the sacrifice on account of the weakness of their mind and understanding (pākatrā manasā and dinadakṣāḥ). Agni is however said to be the best sacrificer (yajīṣṭho), as he is not subject to these human limitations (cf. X.2.1, 'hotṛṇāmā-yajīṣṭhaḥ'). The poet is therefore expecting guidance by following

7. possibly because the service was not considered worthwhile to gain divinity as in the case of the R̥bhus.

8. Sāy. renders 'apyah' = 'Karmavantah' and na putrāḥ = 'na pr̥nantah', which appears farfetched; Ludwig takes Apī to be the name of a lady, who is not referred to elsewhere.

the path of the gods (v.3, ā devānāmapī panthāmaganma yacchaknavāma tadanu pravolhum) particularly as Agni can make good certain defects being an expert hotr (v.4, agniṣṭad viśvamāprnāti vidvān).

The non-sacrificers are referred to by various epithets and in general they are expected to be punished for the sake of the sacrificers, showing how the R̥gvedic poets considered them to be a hindrance in the way of the progress of the cult of the sacrifice which they had come to identify with the progress of the Aryan society in general. Thus Indra is said to be remarking at X.27.1 (asat su me jaritaḥ sābhivego, yatsunvate yajamānāya śikṣam | anāśīrdāmahamasmi prahantā satyadhvṛtaṁ vṛjināyantamābhum ||) that he helps the sacrificer against the non-sacrificer, who is said to be the violator of truth (satyadhvṛt), indicating that sacrifice had come to be identified with truth.

AYAJYU :

The word is used at five places in the R̥gveda, where the non-sacrificers are said to be thrown down by the divinity or as weaker in comparison with the sacrificers. cf. I.121.13 (api kartamavartayaḥ ayajyūn); I.131.4 (śāsastamindra martyamayajyūn); II.26.1 (yajvā idayajyoḥ vibhajāti bhojanam); VII.6.3 (quoted above); VII.83.7 (daśa rājānaḥ samitā ayajyavaḥ sudāsam na yuyudhuḥ) where the ten kings are said to have proved incompetent in the presence of Sudās because of the effective sacrificial performances of Vasiṣṭhas (7c, satyā nṛṇāmadmasadāmupastutiḥ ||).

AYAJVAN :

The word is used seven times in the R̥gveda, where generally non-sacrificers are said to be losing in general to the sacrificers, mainly at the hands of Indra. cf. I.33.4 (ayajvānaḥ sanakāḥ pretimīyuh), where the 'sanakas'⁹ are said to be suffering having been non-sacrificers.

At I.33.5 (parā cicchīrṣā vavṛjusta indrāyajvāno yajvabhiḥ spardhamānāḥ). The non-sacrificers are said to have clashed with the sacrificers and in course of time, to have been scattered away by the intervention of Indra.

At I.103.6 (ya ādṛtyā paripanthīva sūraḥ ayajvano vibhajanneti vedah ||). Indra is said to be forcibly depriving the non-sacrificer of his wealth even like a highway robber. At VII.61.4 (ayanmāsā ayajvanāmavirāḥ pra yajñamanmā vṛjanam tirāte), sacrifice is indi-

9. Vel. B.U.J. XVII 1948 p. 11 considers them to be 'early prototypes of the Panis'; they are perhaps persons who are opposed to the sacrifice from very old days.

cated as an incentive for the stabilisation of the household and the non-sacrificers are said to be remaining without hero-sons. At VIII.31.15-18 (devānām ya inmano yajamāna iyakṣatyabhīdayajvano bhuvat), as a refrain of four verses in different metres, it appears to be emphatically stated how sacrificers surpass the non-sacrificers. At VIII.70.11 (quoted above), it is indicated how an 'anyavrata' can be as good as a non-sacrificer. At X.49.1 (aham bhuvam yajamānasya coditāyajvanah sāksi viśvasminbhare), Vaikuṇṭha Indra is said to emphasize how he defeats the non-sacrificers in battles, indicating how Indra worship gave a great impetus to the cause of the sacrifice.

AYAJŊA :

The word is used twice in the R̥gveda, where Indra and Agni are said to have thrown down the non-sacrificers. At VII.6.3 (quoted above), Paṇis are referred to as 'ayajŋa' as they did not believe in the Aryan mode of worship (āsraddha). At X.138.6 (etā tyā te śrutyāni kevalā yadeka ekamakṛṇoḥ ayajŋam), the credit of overthrowing the non-sacrificer is given solely to Indra, indicating how with the predominance of Indra worship in the tradition of the sacrifice, the non-sacrificing element was practically eliminated.

ANĀHUTI :

The word is referred to once in the R̥gveda in the sense of 'absence of sacrificial performances' which is mentioned as a social calamity side by side with diseases at X.63.12 (apāmivāmapa viśvāmanāhutimapārātiṃ durvidatrāmaghāyataḥ | āre deva dveṣo asma-dyuyotamoru naḥ śarma yacchatā svastaye ||) and which is expected to be removed for the social good (svasti).

AHAVIḤ :

The word is used only once in the R̥gveda at I.182.3 (kimatra dasrāḥ kṛṇuthāḥ kimāsāthe, jano yaḥ kaścidadhavir mahīyate | atikramiṣṭam juratam paṇerasum ||), indicating how there were some persons who were glorified though they would not offer oblations and hence Aśvins are incited not to accept the worship of those people.

APR̥NAT :

The word is used thrice in the R̥gveda to indicate persons who do not offer gifts either to the gods or the priests in the sacrifices. Thus at V.7.10, they are said to be overcome by Atri, a sacrificer. At V.42.9ab (visarmāṇam kṛṇuhi vittameṣām ye bhuñjate apr̥nanto na ukthaiḥ), an interesting section of people, who wanted to derive the benefits of sacrifice without adequately compensating the priests for their labours, is referred to. At V.44.1 also the word appears to

be used in the same sense, where they are indicated to be as bad as the non-soma-pressers (jahi asuṣvīn pravṛha aprṇataḥ).

ASUṢVĪH :

Indra is said to be severing all connection with them as they would not press out the soma juice so that they would have almost no social standing as indicated at IV.25.6 (nāsuṣverāpirna sakhā na jāmiḥ). Soma is said to be segregating them from the soma-sacrificers at IV.24.5. Indra is asked to strike them down at VI.44.1 (see above).

ASUNVAN :

The opposition faced by Indra-worship even in open assemblies is indicated at VIII.14.15 (asunvāmindra sāmsadaṁ viṣūcīm vyanāśayaḥ | somapā uttaro bhavan), where the super soma-drinker Indra is said to have disintegrated a group (sāmsad) of non-soma-pressers.

ASUNVAT :

The word is used eight times in the Ṛgveda in the above sense, some of whom are said to be quite powerful but ultimately put down by Indra. Thus at I.101.4 (vīlościdindro yo asunvato vadhaḥ), Indra is said to be killing even the mighty non-soma-presser. At I.110.7 (yuṣmākaṁ devā avasāhani priye'bhi tiṣṭhema prtsutirasunvatām), Ṛbhus, who also were connected with a soma sacrifice,¹⁰ are requested to afford protection against such persons. At IV.25.7 (quoted above), V.34.5 and X.42.4, Indra is said to be dissociating himself from such persons. At I.176.4, V.34.6, Indra is described as scattering away such persons and prospering the sacrificers.

ADĀMAN :

Out of the two passages,¹¹ only once, the word is used in the sense of those who do not give gifts at the sacrifices (cf. VI.44.12, mā tvādāmānaḥ ādabhan maghonaḥ) where Indra is warned against some rich persons who do not give gifts (in sacrifices).

ARARIVAS :

The word is used nine times in the Ṛgveda in the sense of persons who do not give gifts either to the gods or the priests. At I.18.3, as a sacrificer the poet expects to be kept away from such a person. At I.147.4, such a person is said to be indulging in double-dealing (marcayati dvayena) and as such is expected to come to grief by his own words (anumṛkṣiṣṭa tanvaṁ duruktaiḥ). At I.150.2, such a person is said to be rich and still never bringing offerings to the

10. Vide my paper on Ṛbhus: B.U.J. 1952.

11. VI.24.4; VI.44.12.

gods (vyaninasya dhaninaḥ prahoṣe cidararuṣaḥ). At III.18.2, VII.1.13, VII.56.19, 94.8, the ill-will ('śaṁsa'; 'dhūrti'; 'dveṣaḥ') of such a person is referred to and is expected to be kept away. He is said to be 'greedy' at V.77.1 (grdhrādararuṣaḥ).

ADĀŚU :

At I.174.6, the word is used in the sense of those, who oppose the friends of Indra i.e., the sacrificers.

ADĀSURIḤ :

It is used once in the R̥gveda at VIII.45.15, where the person is referred to as a rich person, who even slights Indra and as such is expected to be punished. It may merely indicate that such persons were niggardly and would not feel like spending their wealth in the sacrifices. This shows how the protagonists of the R̥gvedic sacrifice believed in a noble ideal underlying the sacrifice even as it is indicated by the denunciation of such persons in the Gīta (III.13, bhuñjate te tvaghaṁ pāpā ye pacantyātmakāraṇāt |).

ADĀŚVAS :

The word is used four times in the R̥gveda indicating the non-givers (of offerings in the sacrifice), whose wealth is expected to be given to the sacrificer at I.81.9, VII.19.1, VIII.81.7, IX.23.3.

ARĀVAN :

The word is used in the sense of non-givers like Ararivas and they are expected to be struck down (VII.31.5, randhiḥ; IX.13.9, apaghnantaḥ; IX.61.23, etc.). They are said to be mortals as well as demons (VIII.28.4, arāvā martyaḥ; VIII.60.10, pāhi viśvasmād rakṣaso arāvṇaḥ). The ill-will of those persons as in the case of 'ararivas' is referred to at I.36.15 (pāhi dhurteḥ arāvṇaḥ). cf. also X.37.12 (arāvā yo no abhi ducchunāyate).

ARĀDHAS :

The word is used six times in the R̥gveda, where those persons who do not give gifts are contrasted with the sacrificers. At I.84.8, Indra is asked to trample under his feet the non-sacrificers like weed. At V.61.6 and X.60.6, Paṇis are so referred to (see above). At IX.101.13 (pra sunvānasyāndhaso marto na vr̥ta tadvacāḥ | apa śvānamarādhasaṁ hatā makhaṁ na bhr̥gavaḥ), such a person is denounced as a dog (apa śvānaṁ hata). The poet expresses the desire that such a mortal may not be able to suppress the voice of the soma juice (ab). At X.32.2 (ye tvā vahanti muhuradhvarāṇ upa te su vanvantu vagvanāṁ arādhasaḥ), the bragging non-sacrificers

are referred to indicating how they must be boasting of their way of life and reviling the prevalent mode of worship.

AVRATA :

The word 'vrata' is used in a wider sense of the ordinances of the gods. 'Avrata' appears to be used in the sense of those who are opposed to the cult of divine worship in general. It is thus that the dasyus are referred to as 'avrata' at I.101.2, I.175.3, IX.41.2. Indra is said to have taken a very firm stand against them and wiped them off (I.33.5, yaddivo... niravratāṁ adhamo rodasyoḥ; cf. also I.130.8, 175.3, VIII.97.3). At VI.14.3 (tūrvanto dasyumāyavo vrataiḥ sīkṣanto avrataṁ), the 'avrata' is sought to be overcome by 'vrata' indicating his non-sacrificing character. The contrast between the 'avratas' and the sacrificers is obviously stressed at I.130.8 (indraḥ samatsu yajamānamāryam prāvad... manave śāsadavratāṁ). The opposition of 'avrata' to soma-sacrifice is indicated at I.132.4 (sunvadbhyo randhayā kaṁcidavrataṁ). Dasyus are so referred to at I.51.8 (quoted above).

ADEVAYU :

The word is used only once at II.26.1 (see under 'ayajyu' above).

ADEVATRA :

It is used only at V.61.6 (see under Paṇis above).

ADEVAYU :

The word is used in the sense of people who were opposed to Indra worship at VII.93.5 (adevayum vidathe devayubhiḥ satrā hatam somasutā janena |), where Indrāgni are requested to strike down the 'adevayu' and stand by the soma-pressers. They are referred to as opposed to Indra worship at X.27.2, 3. Soma is asked to drive them away at IX.63.24. They are mentioned along with other non-sacrificers (e.g., with 'ararivas' at I.150.2; with 'ayajvan' and 'anyavrata' at VIII.70.11; with 'avrata' at VIII.97.3), indicating their opposition to Ṛgvedic sacrifice in general.

ADEVA :

The word¹² is used in singular in the sense of one who opposes the gods in general and placing obstacles in the way of the sacrificial performances in general. He is referred to as opponent of Indra, who was chosen as the leader of the gods (cf. VI.17.8, adha tvā viśve pura indra devā ekaṁ tavasaṁ dadhire bharāya | adevo yadabhyauhiṣṭa devāṁ). The mentality of persons who are opposed to the

12. It is used as adjective of Vṛtra at III.32.6 and of 'asuras' at VIII.96.9, where they are expected to be scattered by Indra.

followers of the sacrifice is referred to as 'adeva' at II.23.12. They were expected to be putting obstacles in the way of the arrival of the gods at VI.18.11 and X.37.3 (na te adevaḥ pradivo nivāsate) and offerings at VIII.70.7 (na simadeva āpadiṣaṁ dirghāyo martyaḥ). They appear to be considered as very mischievous as they are said to be carrying away the gifts given by the divinities and hence protection is expected from the divinity (cf. VIII.71.8, agne mākiṣṭe devasya rātimadevo yuyota). They are referred to as 'dāsa' or 'ārya' at X.38.3 (yo no dāsa āryo va puruṣtuta adevaḥ indra yudhaye ciketati ||), indicating that even among the Aryans there was a section opposed to the worship of the divinity which was however put down as the Indra-worship triumphed.

ADEVĪḤ :

The word is used as an attribute of a group of people or their power, which appear to be instrumental in creating certain obstacles in the sacrificial performances. Such groups and tendencies are expected to be destroyed by Indra and other gods. Thus establishments and groups of the non-sacrificers are referred to by the word at I.174.8 (bhinat puro na bhido adevīḥ); V.2.10; VI.25.9; VIII.96.15. The powers and missiles of this section are said to be obstructing either the divinity or the worshipper at V.2.9; VII.1.10; VIII.61.16.

These godless tendencies, being removed are said to be paving the way for sacrificial performances. Thus it is said at VII.98.5 (yadedadevīrasahiṣṭa māyāḥ | athābhavat kevalaḥ somo asya ||), that Indra received the soma juice after he had put them down. It is also indicated how the idea of sacrifice was growing with the idea of divinity.

BRAHMADVIṢAḤ :

The word is used about a dozen times in the R̥gveda in the general sense of those who are opposed to the hymns, to the divinities and their worship in general. As hymns were widely associated with the sacrificial performances, opposition to hymns meant opposition to the sacrifice as well. Thus the gods have been asked to strike down such persons at II.23.4; III.30.17; V.42.9; VI.22.8; 52.2, 3; VII.104.2; VIII.45.23; 64.; X.36.9. At X.160.4, they are contrasted with the soma-pressers and their role as non-sacrificers is clearly indicated.

The 'anṛcaḥ' are similarly expected to be overcome with the help of hymns (and sacrifices) at X.105.8.

Some of the non-sacrificers are referred to as opposed to certain aspects of the sacrificial performances merely in contrast with

others who perform the sacrifices. Thus after describing some of the sacrificers at I.122.8, the poet refers to some who do not press out the soma-juice at I.122.9 (na vām sunoti) and expects them to be punished. Similarly cf. 'devanidaḥ' at I.152.2 and others who do not offer oblations in the sacrifices at X.79.1.

After describing the brāhmins who sacrifice at X.71.8, the poet of the hymn is referring to others who are their opposites in v.9. (ime ye nārvāṇna paraścaranti na brāhmaṇāso na sutekarāsaḥ | ta ete vācamabhipadya pāpayā siristantram tanvate aprajajñayaḥ ||). The movements referred to in 'a', the pressing of soma juice in 'b', and the metaphor of weaving in 'd' make clear the point of description here. 'c' very possibly refers to the mispronunciations of the hymns. The ignorance of such persons is indicated by their being called 'aprajajñayaḥ'. The reference to sacrificing priests in X.71.11 also indicates the non-sacrificing character of the people referred to in v.9. At X.131.2, some persons, who do not participate in the arrangement of the sacrificial grass (and consequently the performances) are referred to (ye barhiṣo namovṛktiṁ na jagmuḥ).

Some persons indulging in undesirable or censurable modes of worship appear to be indicated by the words 'mūradevāḥ' (at VII.104.24, X.87.2, 14), 'anṛtadevāḥ' (at VII.104.14) and 'śiśnadevāḥ' (at VII.21.5; X.99.3).

Like 'brahmadviṣaḥ', who are expected to be kept away from the bright Sun (V.42.9, sūryād yāvayasva), the 'mūradevas' are expected not to see even the bright sun rising (mā te dṛśan sūryamuccarantaṁ). Vasiṣṭha's protestation at VII.104.14 (yadi vāhamanṛta-deva āsam) indicates that such persons were associated with some objectionable practices with which respectable priests of the time did not want to be associated.

It may be noted that the reference to 'śiśnadevas' occurs at two places, where Indra is being praised. Though there is a general mention of 'viṣuṇa jantu' at VII.21.5c, indicating the revilers, the reference to 'yātu', 'vandanā' and 'śiśnadevas' indicates their distinctive existence and practices. Those practices were apparently considered as repugnant by the protagonists of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice, as is indicated by the request at VII.21.5 (mā śiśnadevā api gurṛtaṁ naḥ) that they should not be allowed to approach the sacrificial performances of the Aryan worshippers. They appear to have a fairly good following as a god like Indra was required to overpower them X.99.3 (ghnañ śiśnadevāñ abhi varpaśā bhūt).

Thus it can be seen that during the course of its growth, the sacrifice has encountered manifold opposition but still has grown

from strength to strength on account of the increasing interest taken in its growth by an overwhelming majority of people in the Aryan society. This opposition was both from Aryan as well as non-Aryan sources. The growth of Indra worship however appears to have set at rest all such opposing elements. A more subtle type of opposition appears to have been offered by persons, who would question the validity and efficacy of the existing ritual or would oppose the worship of certain divinities by questioning or challenging their authority. But the intellectual and cultural background of the society combined with the soundness of the ideology being evolved through the sacrifice, appears to have helped the Aryan ritual to stand against its rivals.

Sacrifice was associated with all that was noble and glorious in human life by the denunciation of the non-sacrificers as being away from humanity and truth (VIII.70.11 and X.27.1 quoted above). It is this essentially intellectual appeal that appears to have gone a long way in stabilising the influence of the sacrifice in the days of the Rġveda.

The foundation of the idea of the sacrifice has been laid on a firm footing by denouncing the idea of 'not giving gifts' (either to the gods or the sacrificing priests) and by emphasizing the desirability of equitable distribution of wealth. It is for this reason that the non-sacrificers have been denounced in no unmistakable terms at various places and their wealth expected to be distributed.

Chapter Ten

MYSTICAL ELEMENT IN THE R̥GVEDIC SACRIFICE

यज्ञस्य जिह्णामविदाम गुह्याम् । (RV. X. 53.8)

अविन्दन्ते अतिहितं यदासीद् यज्ञस्य धाम परमं गुहा यत् । (RV. X. 181.2)

SYNOPSIS :

Mysticism—primitive—its characteristics—Macnicol's view about 'mystical affinities'—hymns experimenting with the idea of divinity—sacrifice as means—range of human thought from magic to mysticism—Dr. Deshmukh's view about the two—

Divinities not conceived as spirits—traces of magic in the RV—elevation of thought in spiritual aspects—progressive spiritualisation of the idea—'emotional approach' to divinities expounded by Prof. Velankar rules out magic as basis—the idea of 'mystery' combined with that of a 'higher reality', nearer to mysticism—

Macdonell's view regarding the R̥gvedic ritual examined—mystical element in different aspects of sacrifice—certain rites—the role of Agni—mystical significance of certain materials—soma ghr̥ta at IV. 58.1-3—Svāhā, svadhā and vaṣaṭ—

Indication of associations of certain figures—secret name to the divinity in the sacrifice—mystical role of some hymns—metres—II.18 discussed—VI.9, probing into the mystery of sacrifice—some other hymns—Haug's view regarding X.61.1-2—general tendency to trade brahmanic ideas in the R̥gvedic sacrifice—

Mystical element in the course of the evolution of the idea of sacrifice—cause of later deterioration on the analogy about the Gītā.

In theory, mysticism is said to be "the historic doctrine of the relationship and potential union of the human soul with the Ultimate Reality" and in practice, 'the mystical experience' is said to be direct intercourse with God'.¹

In this technical sense, it would be true to say that "the indications of mystic attitude in the R̥gvedic period are but few" and "the religion of the hymns in the R̥gveda is objective in character."² At the same time, however, it should be obvious that the hymns of the R̥gveda do not appear to be illustrative of the Primitive type of Mysticism,³ which is characterized by a sort of 'mystical union' in the magic practices thereof. Discussing this aspect of the primitive religion E. Lehmann remarks, "Religious mysticism as an intuitive and ecstatic union with the deity, by contemplative practices, is very rarely found among the primitive races. They lack the idea of God as a spiritual Universal being, which is theoretical presup-

1. ERE IX. p. 83b—R. M. Jones.

2. ERE IX. p. 114b Macnicol.

3. ERE IX. p. 85a E. Lehmann.

position of the elevating of the mind; and their lower stage of reflexion does not allow the series of abstractions and psychological analysis ordinarily involved in the practices of the mystics.”⁴

N. Macnicol believed that the real mystical attitude was possible in the case of God Varuṇa, where however ‘unmystical attitude’ is perceptible. He makes note of ‘some mystic affinities’ (in X.190) or “a different kind of mysticism” (in X.90).⁵

Thus it would be clear that the theoretical and practical aspects of mysticism require a well-defined and clear-cut idea about the individual souls as well as the spiritual experience of the individual in his relationship with the Higher Reality. The hymns of the R̥gveda, while evolving the idea of divinity appear to be experimenting with the various aspects and forms of the same,⁶ with the sacrifice as a means of this experimentation. It is through the medium of the sacrifice that the thinkers of the time appear to shape their ideas about Religion and Philosophy.⁷

It is true that a definite idea about the relationship of the individual soul and the Higher Reality has not been forthcoming from the hymns of the R̥gveda. It is also true that hymns of magical character are to be come across even in the R̥gveda. But the proportion of such hymns to the others of a general religious character is so insignificantly small, that it is impossible to infer therefrom a purely magical origin of the idea of the R̥gvedic sacrifice. The classification of human experience of a special character into two aspects of primitive and non-primitive types is certainly not very much the correct way of analysing this experience. From magic, characterizing the primitive idea of religion to mysticism of the higher spiritual character is a long jump. Human thought cannot justifiably be understood as taking this long jump in one stride. If we allow the hymns of the R̥gveda with all the diversity of their contents slide before our eyes, trailing the story of the progress of the Aryan thought in its spiritual aspect, we can clearly visualise it as progressing by gradual stages. In fact there appears to be conscious attempt at progressive evolution of the conception about the spiritual Reality from the gross to the subtle, from the obviously manifest to the mystically unmanifest aspects.⁸ In the light of this range of thought, when we try to determine a place for an overwhelming majority of the hymns of the R̥gveda, which deal with the idea of gods, reli-

4. *Ibid.*

5. ERE IX. p. 114.

6. Vide Chapter III.

7. cf. Chapter XIII and BV Vol. XII 1951 pp. 163-171.

8. Deussen (History of philosophy Vol. I, part i p. 119) wrote about X.129 ‘in loftiness of its philosophic vision, it is possibly the most admirable bit of philosophy of olden times’. Bloomfield (RVB p. 234) quotes Whitney who considered these unlimited praises of the hymn as “well-nigh nauseating”.

gion and sacrifice, it is not quite easy to stamp them as based on a sort of refined magic as some scholars have done (see below).

If the deities were conceived merely as some spirits, over whom the priests had a control by means of the performances of certain rites, the religion of the Rġveda could have been considered to be magical in character and the sacrifice as having a purely magical origin. But the general trend of the hymns does not appear to indicate such a conception about the divinities, nor are the poets referred to as dominating over the divinities (vide Chapter VII). The nature of the sacrifice in general too does not give an impression of growing with any magical purpose in view.

Dr. Deshmukh⁹ has expounded the view that the religion of the Rġveda has not grown out of the idea of magic and though the magic did exist, it existed as an unimportant growth side by side with the idea of religion and as corollaries has drawn two more valid inferences viz., "Prayer is not derived from charm" and "Priests were not at first magicians". He has referred to Oldenberg's view¹⁰ regarding the vedic ritual being overgrown with magical practices and pointed out the obvious drawbacks of the same. We believe with Dr. Deshmukh that magic and religion grow on account of two entirely different psychological tendencies, which run parallel to each other and as in the famous illustration of Śāṅkara, are like the two horns of a bullock, which do not grow one out of the other. Magic, religion and mysticism thus owe their origin to a varying psychological background and hence merely because the Rġvedic religion or sacrifice is ancient, it cannot be conveniently regarded as magical in character as a number of scholars have been tempted to do.

This can be further substantiated by taking into account a good deal of other evidence, furnished by the hymns of the Rġveda.

Thus the idea and practice of magic appears to be known to some of the poets of the Rġvedic hymns.¹¹ But though being within the range of their sight, it has not vitiated their ideas about religion, divinities and sacrifice which they appear to be consciously evolving through their compositions. They have obviously steered clear of the common rut, through which they have had to pass.

It becomes clearer from the existence of a number of hymns, philosophical in character, which try to formulate the idea of a Higher Reality, underlying the existing universe. These hymns indicate the progressive aspect of the religious thought, which could become the basis of higher religious mysticism later on.

9. RVL p. 45.

10. Ibid. p. 49.

11. Chapter VII, particularly under 'Vasisthas'.

A glance at the nature and characteristics of different divinities should also make clear the fact that whatever their origin, there is a clear and definite attempt on the part of the R̥gvedic poets to elevate them in their spiritual aspect. What has been designated as 'Henotheism' or 'Kathenotheism' by Max Müller is also clearly an attempt in this very direction to see that the spiritual height of that divinity is raised, may be for the purposes of the ritual as Bloomfield imagines.¹²

In this connection, the conception of the Viśvedevas is also worthy of note. The implications of it as far as the sacrifice in the R̥gveda is concerned have been discussed elsewhere.¹³ When the sacrifices were being offered to individual divinities, big and small, the idea of offering the same to a combined group of divinities cannot be imagined as magical in its origin; because, as so many spirits, meant to fulfil the diverse needs of the worshippers, their combination would be unimaginable. It was apparently rendered possible by a certain measure of spiritual similarity and affinity between them. The fact that the idea of a single divinity could be ultimately evolved out of almost a crowd of individual divinities is due to the fact that a single compact group was the intermediate stage between the two. Different spirits cannot by the same process be imagined to have been combined into one single spirit. Thus it is this spiritual aspect of the idea of divinity which came to be increasingly emphasized as is illustrated in the famous passage (I.164.46, *ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti...*) and the existence of this process of thought-evolution rules out of possibility a magical origin for the idea of divinity and consequently the sacrifice.

A glimpse into the emotional approach to the idea of divinity on a sound intellectual basis of the hymns, artistically composed for the purpose by the poets, can be obtained from the nature of the conception of 'devotion' as expounded by Prof. Velankar.¹⁴ The emphasis, thus in the approach to the divinity, is on propitiation and not on dictation. As this is sought to be done through the medium of sacrifice, it cannot be conceived as having been based on magic, because magic presupposes the idea of dictation.

Thus while the thinkers are slowly but steadily defining their relationship with the divinity on an intellectual and emotional plane of thought, a touch of mystery has occasionally crept in. Sacrifice as the medium of this expression has also come to be looked at with the same mood of mystification. It is not mere mystery as perceptible in the early magic. At the same time, it has not reached the

12. RVB p. 199 "Their rotation in the ritual, rather than forgetfulness of the virtues of the preceeding gods, is the truth at the bottom of this Henotheism".
13. Chapters III and XI under 'Viśvedevas'.
14. RBV 1952.

higher standards of mysticism because the ideas about individual soul and the Higher Reality have not come to be formulated so clearly as required for the purpose. But at the same time it is noteworthy that the idea of divinity is being progressively evolved and elevated to a higher plane of spiritual Reality. Thus a note of mystery or mystification perceptible in the description of the sacrifice can be more fittingly designated as the 'the mystical element in the sacrifice', because in its tone, it is nearer to the mysticism than to the magic.

Macdonell has taken a different view.¹⁵ He admits that the number of hymns purely magical in character is very small (p. 312), and that "the essential character of vedic religion is propitiatory and persuasive"; but ultimately concludes that the vedic sacrifices are 'saturated with magical observances'. (p. 312).

About magic he remarks, "magic endeavours to gain its ends by influencing the course of events without the intervention of divine beings—so its essential character is coercive." But as this characteristic of the magical aspect is visible in a negligible number of hymns, he says (p. 312b) "An examination of the ritual literature shows that the dividing line between a sacrificial act, which is meant to propitiate the gods and a magical act, which is intended to control the course of things, is by no means always definite, but that the two are often intermingled."

Thus he sees magical note in X.98, 1.83.4, 5, VII.76.4, X.62.3, 68.11, and X.33. Regarding the soma ritual, he says that the following references are magical in character (IX.49.1, 97.17, 106.9, 108.9), where according to him soma brings rain without the intervention of the gods.

With due regard to the great scholar, it must be said that his exposition of this aspect of the sacrifice is neither satisfactory nor convincing. The inconsistency involved in his statements quoted earlier is too obvious to require any comment. The individual passages referred to by him are being considered below. But it has to be noted that the peculiar view that he has taken appears to be due to his preconceived notion that the Rġvedic sacrifice is almost the same as the later sacrifice. The dearth of passages from the Rġveda to substantiate his view has led him to imagine that magic pervades the performances though not the hymns. He accounts for its absence in the hymns by saying that "the prayers being addressed to the great gods, offered few opportunities for references to magical practices." (p. 312a). It is obviously untenable; because if the magical influence was required, the hymns could have been

15. ERE Vol. VIII 'Vedic Magic'; (pp. 311-321). cf. Keith—RPV p. 379 "we cannot believe that there was ever a time when the vedic sacrifice was not filled with magic elements".

fashioned accordingly. In fact the hymns have been fashioned according to the purpose they had in view. This attempt therefore of seeing in the hymns, what does not exist in them cannot be substantiated by any type of reasoning whatsoever. The remark about the priests merely appears to be meant to rope them in as they were participating in the ritual performances which he considers to be 'saturated with magic'. The role of the priests has been considered elsewhere (vide Chapter VII) and it can be observed clearly that they never mixed up magic with the idea of the sacrifice.¹⁶

Macdonell's remark (p. 313a) that "Long before the RV., the magician has turned into a priest" would indicate consciousness on his part of the higher aspects of divinity that the poets were propitiating through the sacrifices. He however proceeds by saying that "yet even in the earliest period, the sacrificial priest was a magician as well" (p. 313b) and tries to substantiate it by saying, "It cannot be supposed that even the most advanced minds among the priests regarded prayer and sacrifice as the only means of securing welfare, while rejecting magic, as an effective and reprehensible superstition." (p. 313b).

This will sufficiently make it clear how the scholar appears to be vacillating between the two ends, not being able to make up his mind regarding the real state of affairs. His attempt to analyse the source of this magical influence at (p. 313a), "The gradual mixture of the religious and the magical in the direction of the latter led the whole system of sacrifice to assume this character in the later vedic period," can also be realised as not at all convincing.

The predominant religious tone of the hymns, rising on occasions to higher mystical plane is too obvious either to be ignored or to be explained off. From whichever plane it has originated, to whichever plane it may have degenerated in the days that followed, the plane at which it stands in the days of the Rġveda, can by no stretch of imagination be described as being magical in character.

A consideration of the passages would further make it clear how they also do not support any idea of magic.

X.98 : Vide Chapter XI.

1.83.4-5 : The poet while describing Indra, refers to Aṅgirasas and Atharvan as having attained the results through sacrifices (in honour of Indra, who is under description) as indicated by 'iddhāgnayaḥ śamyā ye sukṛtyayā' and "yajñairatharvā prathamāḥ pathastate". When thus their power is said to be coming through

16. cf. Dr. Deshmukh quoted above, pp. 141-42.

the sacrifice to Indra, it cannot be described as 'directly influencing things and events'.¹⁷

VII.76.4 associates the pitṛs with the gods (ta iddevānām sadhamāda āsan) and thus the function associated with the gods naturally comes to be associated with them. In no way can the intervention of the gods be said to be considered as dispensable here.

X.62 : Vide Chapter XI.

X.68.11 : The Pitṛs are associated with Br̥haspati (br̥haspatirbhinadadriṁ etc.). For explanation, cf. VII.76.4 above.

III.33. Viśvāmitra has clearly emphasized the role of Indra in the flowing of the rivers (v. 3, 6, 'indro asmānaradad vajrabāhuḥ') and described how they were perfectly under his control (tasya vayan prasave yāma urvīḥ). It is as a devotee of Indra that he is requesting the rivers and the rivers are yielding to him. There is no idea of Indra's help having been dispensed with by the poet for the attainment of the desired result.

Regarding the passages from the ninth maṇḍala, where soma is described as bringing rain, it is not the soma-offering that is said to be bringing rain but Soma as the divinity who is doing so and hence they do not indicate any magic in the soma-ritual as Macdonell imagines.

Regarding 'Dikṣā' and 'Avabhṛtha' he says¹⁸ that they are 'probably known to the Ṛgveda' and that they are 'ancient types of magical rites'. It may be noted that he does not refer to any passage, which he construes as a reference to 'dikṣā'. As a matter of fact 'dikṣā' is not referred to in the Ṛgveda at all. Avabhṛtha is also referred to only once (VIII.93.23).¹⁹ As the offerings (hotrā) are said to be flowing towards 'avabhṛtha' in the place of sacrifice (adhvare) in honour of Indra (indicated by indram vṛdhāsaḥ), there is no possibility whatsoever of 'avabhṛtha' being imagined as associated with magic.

Thus magic cannot be considered as associated either with the origin of the sacrifice or with any other aspect of its performance during the course of its growth in the days of the Ṛgveda. It can however be seen that a kind of mystical element has come to be associated with the sacrificial performance in its various aspects so as to lead it to the divinity with a sort of mysterious source of strength.

Thus a sacrificial ritual of some mystical significance is referred to at I.72.6 (triḥ sapta yad guhyāni tva it | padāvidannihitā yajñiyā-

17. ERE VIII p. 312.

18. ERE Vol. XII 614b; quoted by Dr. Deshmukh (RVL p. 340), who apparently agrees.

19. Vide Chapter IV p. 86 for the explanation of the word as a soma vessel.

saḥ ||) where the sacrificers are said to be knowing some twenty-one secret steps associated with Agni. It is too much to imagine that twenty-one types of sacrifices are referred to here as Sāyaṇa imagines.²⁰ Twenty-one types of offerings as Griffith imagines²¹ also have not been referred to elsewhere. It appears to refer to some sacrificial rite connected with Agni, having some mystical source of strength that the priests associated with the performance thereof and was known in details to them (padāvidan nihitā yajñiyāsaḥ).

At VIII.72.7 (duhanti saptakāmupa dvā pañca sṛjataḥ | tīrthe sindhoradhi svare ||), in a riddle-like fashion, a typical sacrificial performance of some known potency appears to be described. The reference in 'ab' is apparently to seven priests²² (II.1.2, etc), who appear to be singing loudly (adhi svare) on the bank of some river (sindhoḥ tīrthe). The association of the rite with Agni is referred to in vv.1 and 18 and offerings of madhu and soma in vv. 9,11 and 12.

The role played by Agni in conveying the sacrificial offerings to the gods is also visualised as a mysterious function, due to some mystical strength fancied as underlying the sacrificial performance. Thus in the two hymns (IV.13 and 14), which are obviously fashioned one after the other, the poet repeats the last verse of the 13th in the 14th hymn, emphasizing apparently the significance that the poet is attaching to the contents thereof. The poet is raising a point about Agni: (anāyato anibaddhaḥ kathāyaṁ nyañnuttāno'va padyate na | kayā yāti svadhayā, ko dadarśa, divaḥ skambhaḥ samṛtaḥ pāti nākam ||). It is clear that Agni's role in the sacrifice is being referred to by the poet in both these hymns as can be inferred by a reference to the place of sacrifice at IV.13.1 (sukṛtām durone), to the web of sacrifice being woven by Agni at IV.13.4 (vahiṣṭhebirviharanyāsi tantum avavyayannasitam...), to the offerings in the sacrifice at IV.14.4 (imehi...madhupeyāya somā — asmin yajñe). When Agni is going to the gods in such a sacrifice, the stanza under consideration raises the point as to how Agni can proceed unsupported to heaven. The source of this strength (svadhā) is apparently the mystical power, associated with the sacrificial performance.

With certain materials of sacrificial performance too, such mystical significance is associated. The reference to prayers (I.139.1) and the offerings (v.3) indicates the association with sacrifice and in that context it is said about 'soma' at I.139.2 (yuvoritthādhi sadmasvapaśyāma hiraṇyayaṁ |...somasya svebhirakṣabhiḥ) that with the eyes of 'soma' the poet can see the 'hiraṇyaya'. The reference is possibly to the custom of drinking soma-juice,²³ which is appa-

20. Seven pākayajñas, seven haviryajñas and seven somayajñas.

21. HRG Vol. I, p. 97 f.n.

22. cf. also 'hotr' in Chapter VII, p. 61.

23. Vide Chapter VI.127

rently imagined to give some mystical potency to the person so as to enable him to see 'the hiraṇyaya',²⁴ even as the granting of divine vision²⁵ was required to enable Arjuna to see the 'Viśvarūpa' in the Gītā.

At IX.6.9 (vide Chapter II p. 25), soma is said to be assigning a place of secret importance to the hymns and as augmenting their efficacy in the sacrificial performance.

For some mystical significance associated with certain categories of hymns cf. X.85.6 referred to in Chapter II, p. 29. Regarding some mystical associations with some other materials and aspects of the sacrifice cf. X.114.3-6 (vide Chapter XI).

Some mystical significance is associated with 'ghṛta' at IV.58.1-3. In v.1cd (ghṛtasya nāma guhyaṁ yadasti jivhā devānāmamṛtasya nābhiḥ), the mysterious source of strength of the ghṛta, which it possesses and transmits to the gods is indicated by reference to its 'secret name', its being 'the tongue of the gods' and 'the centre of immortality'.

In v.2ab (vayaṁ nāma pra bravāmā ghṛtasyā'smin yajñe dhārayāmā namobhiḥ), for some mystical purpose in view, the '(secret) name' of the ghṛta is said to be proclaimed. It is said to be coming forth from a 'four-horned bull' (catuḥśrṅgo gaurah),²⁶ whose riddle-like description is given in the following verse (v.3). (catvāri śrṅgā trayo asya pādā dve śīrṣe sapta hastāso yasya | tridhā baddho vṛṣabho roravīti maho devo martyān ā viveśa ||), where some aspects of sacrifice apparently are described to convey some mystical significance associated with it.

The origin of the utterances 'svāhā' 'svadhā' and 'vaṣaṭ'²⁷ also appears to lie in the desire to add a sort of mystical touch to the offering and through it to the sacrifice. Out of these 'svadhā' appears to be hardly used, as the Pitryajña came to be introduced at a later stage.²⁸ Svāhā was apparently the earliest to be used for offering oblations as is indicated at X.2.2 (svāhā vayaṁ kṛṇavāmā havīṁsi) and its employment in the Āpri hymns. The later introduction of 'vaṣaṭ' indicated at II.36.1 and also by its reference in the Aśvamedha hymn (I.162.15) appears to have been with a view to add a sort of mystical source of protection to the oblation. cf. X.115.9, where after the utterance, the divinity is asked to guard it. Viṣṇu is also asked to accept the oblation because of 'vaṣaṭ' at VII.99.7. The idea of 'vaṣaṭkṛti' becoming acceptable to the gods is also refer-

24. 'Sun' according to Ludwig and Griffith.

25. 'divyaṁ dadāmi cakṣuste' XI.8

26. 'Sacrifice' according to Mahidhara.

27. Vide Chapter V, p. 116.

28. Vide Chapter VI, under 'pitryajña' pp. 128-130.

red to at I.14.8, 31.5, VII.14.3, 15.6,²⁹ VIII.28.2, X.17.2. At I.120.4, the mystical effect intended by the poets is indicated (vi prcchāmi pākya na devān vaṣaṭkṛtasya adbhutasya dasrā), where some miraculous (adbhuta) touch is said to be given to the hymn as a result of the utterance 'vaṣaṭ'.

In the same way, certain figures appear to be associated with some mystical significance. Thus the figure 'three' is associated with the (1) powers (2) places (3) tongues and (4) bodies of Agni at III.20.2. They are apparently with reference to the sacrificial aspect of Agni as indicated by the preceding stanza where the gods are described as 'adhvaram vāvaśānāḥ'.

III.56 is also similarly based on the mystical significance of the figure 'three' expressed most elaborately as associated with different divinities with the ultimate purpose of their presence in the sacrificial assembly in view (III.56.12, vidathe santu devāḥ). Thus the lustres, udders, forms and mothers of Agni are said to be three (v.3). Savitr is also similarly said to be bringing gifts thrice a day (v.6), inspiring people thrice (v.7, IV.53.5 and IX.74.6).

The word 'tridhātu' has also come to be employed with some mystical significance in view. Agni is said to be 'tridhātuśṛṅgaḥ vṛṣabhaḥ' (V.43.13). Hymn addressed to Indra is also said to be 'tridhātu' (VIII.51.4). The barhis spread for Agni is also 'tridhātu' (VIII.102.14). The pressed-out soma is also 'tridhātu' (IX.1.8, 70.8, 86.46). Sacrificial assemblies, attended by Agni are said to be 'tridhātu' (VIII.39.9). Protection coming from the deities is said to be 'tridhātu' (I.34.6, 85.12; VI.35.2 46.9; VII.101.2; VIII.47.10). Wealth obtained from the divinities is also said to be 'tridhātu' (III.56.6).

At VII.87.4 (uvāca me varuṇo medhirāya triḥ sapta mānā aghnyā bibharti | vidvān padasya guhyā na vocat yugāya vipra uparāya sikṣan ||), twenty-one names of the cow are referred to, which are said to be taught by the god Varuṇa to the intelligent poet. The mystical effect is heightened by further remarking that the secrets have not been fully revealed (cd). The association with sacrifice is indicated by the description of the poets as 'yajñadhirāḥ, v.3.

Quarters, Ādityas and the hotṛs³⁰ are said to be seven and through them protection is expected (IX.114.3). Agni is said to be 'saptajivha' at III.6.2. For sevenfold prayer, cf. VIII.51.4, X.67.1. The seven 'dhāmans' (places or lustres) of sacrifice (IX.102.2, yajñasya sapta dhāmabhiḥ) have also some mystical significance in view as is also indicated at X.52.4 and 124.1 where it is described as 'saptatantu'.

29. ABI p. 23, where Haug sees reference to 'anuvaṣaṭkṛti' of the later days.
30. for seven hymns cf. Chapter II. p. 30 and seven priests, Chapter VII, p. 161.

Some group of four verses or hymns, recited one after another was imagined to produce some mystical effect as is indicated at VIII. 60.9 (pāhi no agne ekayā, pāhyuta dvitīyayā | pāhi gīrbhistṛtīyayā ūrjāmpate pāhi catasṛbhirvaso ||).³¹ At X.13.3³² too, the association of the figures 'four' and 'five' appears to convey the idea of some mystical effect in the sacrificial performance indicated by the reference to 'ṛtasya nābhi' in (d).

In a similar way, the secret name employed for a sacrificial performance is said to be third or fourth³³ at VIII.80.9. Whatever this fourth name might have been, it appears that there was in prevalence a custom of assuming a secret name for the purposes of a sacrifice. It was apparently done with the idea that the secret name along with the number four would mystically add to the efficacy of the performance. The reference to the name of the god Indra would indicate that the divinities would also be given such names during a sacrificial performance. Similarly at IX.75.2, soma or the sacrificer is said to be assuming the third name. These names secretly given appear to be guarded by the poets in their sacrificial traditions. These names must have been differently given by different persons and it would be on the mystical effect of the same that the efficacy of the sacrifice would depend. Thus when a particular performance would be specially effective, the names employed therein would be scrupulously guarded as a secret by them as is indicated at X.5.2 (ṛtasya padam kavayo ni pānti | guhā nāmāni dadhire parāni ||). At X.45.2 (vidmā te agne tredhā trayāni vidmā te dhāma | vidmā te nāma paramam guhā yat ||), the poet refers to the secret name of Agni, which was supposed to be unknown to others and hence boasts of his knowledge of the very source of Agni (vidmā tamu sam yata ājagantha |). At IX.95.2 (devo devānām guhyāni nāmā āviṣkṛnoti barhiṣi pra vāce |), it appears to be indicated that these names were to be uttered only when the grass was arranged for the sake of the sacrificial performance.

The idea underlying the employment of such secret names appears to be that the gods were possessed of a secret way of thinking, which was not known to the poets as it is remarked at X.12.8 (yasmin devā manmani samcaranti apīcye na vayamasya vidma |). If it is not known, the poet used to consider himself an offender and hence pray for declaration of his innocence (mitro no atra aditiranā-gān savitā devo varuṇāya vocat |).

In a similar way some compositions of some poets or some verses therefrom had come to be associated with some mystical significance. Thus after describing the mystical significance of his

31. The reference cannot be to quarters as Ludwig suggests (HRG II p. 200 F.N.).

32. Vide Chapter XI; Geldner Vol. III, pp. 140-42.

33. Sāy. 'soma-yāji' iti caturtham nāma tacca yajñīyam | ; Vel. B.U.J. XVI 1947 p. 4 who says that significance is not quite clear.

performance on account of the 'vaṣaṭkāra' at I.120.4 (see above), the poet is referring to his composition as equally efficacious with those of the ancient poets at I.120.5. This would indicate that the composition of 'Ghoṣa' had come to be associated with some mystical potency for the purposes of a sacrifice.

At X.85.6, the mystical role of the hymns styled 'nārāsaṁsi' etc. is referred to. The same would appear to be the case with the Nivids and the Bṛhad and Rathantara sāmān.³⁴ In X.114, the altar³⁵ etc. are indicated as possessed of some mystical significance, as the power of the hymns is said to be co-extensive with the Heaven and the Earth (8b, yāvad dyāvāpṛthivī tāvadittat |).

Certain hymns were expected to possess a mystical significance through divine favour. Thus it is described at IV.5.3 (padam na gorapagūlham vividvān agnirmahyam predu vocanmaniṣām |) that Agni has declared such a hymn to the poet.

The riddle hymns³⁶ and certain riddle-like verses scattered throughout the hymns appear to convey the idea of some mystical significance of theosophical, mythological or philosophical importance, associated with them.

II.18 appears to be a typical expression of the idea of sacrifice in a riddle-like fashion. The elaboration of the metaphor indicates a number of mystical associations of the sacrifice.

Thus in v.1, the morning sacrifice is said to be a chariot³⁷ with four yokes, three whips and seven reins, urged on by means of the hymns (matibhiḥ ramhyaḥ). The three soma-pressings, appear to be referred to at 2ab and in a mystifying tone the point is further described at 2cd (anyasya garbhamanya ū jananta, so anyebhiḥ sacate jeyo vṛṣā). A similar attempt is visible in v.4 and then Indra is requested to come with horses, progressively increasing in number (vv.4-6) from two to a hundred.

VI.9 is a typical hymn, which attempts to probe into the mystery of the sacrifice.

With the metaphor of weaving, the poet says that he does not know the warps and the woofs that go to weave the fabric of sacrifice (v.2a). The poet apparently belongs to a later age in the tradition of sacrifice as is indicated by some ancient sacrificers, who know it (2b, yaṁ vayanti samare'tamānāḥ). V.2cd (kasya svit putra iha vaktvāni paro vadātyavareṇa pitrā) suggests that the secret of the sacrifice can be known only through the Vaiśvānara fire. Thus it is stated at v.3ab (sa it tantum sa vijānāti otum etc.) that Vaiśvā-

34. Vide Chapter II p. 33.

35. Vide Chapter XI.

36. Vide Chapter XI.

37. 'daśaritra' (in c) possibly indicates another metaphor of sacrifice as boat (Vide Chapter XII).

nara knows the fabric of the sacrifice. The secret of the power of Vaiśvānara is his immortality (v.3c amṛtasya gopāḥ) and his prevalence in both the worlds in different forms (3d, avaścāran paro anyena paśyan). It is for this reason that he is entitled to be called the 'first hotṛ' (4a, ayam hotā prathamah). As firmly established among the mortals for the purposes of the sacrifice and consequently growing in stature (4cd) he naturally knows the secret of the sacrifice. With the role of the gods in the sacrifice in view, Agni is said to be established by the gods with a fixed purpose in view (5cd.).

In this way the important role of the Vaiśvānara fire in the secret of the sacrifice has been emphasized. But it is also being pointed out that it is not an easy thing to know this Vaiśvānara. Thus it is said in v.6, that ears, eyes, heart and mind are incompetent to grasp his real nature.³⁸ Even the gods are said to be bowing down before this mysteriously magnified nature of Vaiśvānara. v.7 ab, viśve devā anamasyan bhiyānāstvāmagne tamasi tasthivāmsam). In this way, the poet has tried to describe how the Reality underlying the sacrificial performance is also, like the philosophical reality, beyond the ken of human thought and expression (VI.9.6d, kim svid vakṣyāmi kimu nū maṇiṣye). Thus sacrifice has been glorified as playing a mystically significant role in the existence of the universe, as is also done with a different metaphor at VII.101.3 (pituh payah prati grbhṇāti mātā, tena pitā vardhate tena putrah), where the heavenly gods and the mortals are said to be prospering through the sacrifices that can be performed with the oblations obtained by the shower of rain and in this way, what is said about Parjanya at VII.101.4a (yasmin viśvāni bhuvanāni tasthuh) can rightly be said about the sacrifice.³⁹

It is with this role of Agni in view that he is referred to as the 'tongue of the sacrifice' at X.53.3 and through him the sacrifice is said to be well-performed (3a, sādhvīmakar devavītim).

I.164,⁴⁰ which deals with almost all the topics of discussion, pertaining to the various aspects of the existing world in a riddle-like fashion also touches upon occasionally some of the aspects of the sacrifice. Thus the mystical significance of some of the hymns in different metres is referred to at I.164.25. The importance of sacrifice is metaphorically described at I.164.35. In I.162 and 163⁴¹ referring to the divine origin of the horse and the details of the

38. cf. X.82.7 for a similar remark about Viśvakarman.

39. cf. Gītā III.16 (evam pravartitam cakram).

40. Vide Chapter XI.

41. ABI Vol. I, pp. 12-13. The contention of Haug that I.162 is an early hymn as (1) it mentions Mitra, Varuṇa and Aryaman and (2) as it is written in an unpolished style and poor imagery (p. 12) cannot stand as (1) other gods have been mentioned (Vide VV 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 etc.) and (2) unpolished style is no criterion for the early character of the hymn. cf. also remarks in Chapter XI under I.162.

offering of his body at various stages of the sacrificial performance, indicates the idea of some mystical associations which had come to be imagined by the time.

About X.61 and 62⁴², Haug says, (p.28) "Nābhānediṣṭha is purely sacrificial and composed at a time when the Ṛṣis already indulged in speculations on the mystical meaning of sacrificial rites" and explains it by pointing out how the hymn has the mystical significance of providing the sacrificer with a body in view. He draws this conclusion on a different interpretation of the first two verses of X.61. This is obviously done by him with the later ritual significance in view as would be clear from his reference to the Brāhmaṇas (p.25). Eventhough he takes it to be an ancient hymn, he thinks that it is discussing some aspects of sacrifice, because, according to him, "oldest hymns are purely sacrificial and made only for sacrificial purposes." (p. 39) and that "on a more close comparison of the mystical parts of the Saṁhitā with the Brāhmaṇas, one must come to the conclusion, that the latter were already commenced during the period of the former" (p. 49). It is thus that he is attempting to see the later mystical significance in this hymn. It should be noted that like the poet of I.164, the poet of X.61 also appears to have some abstract notions regarding the sacrifice and divinities in view. There is no trace however of the specific view referred to by him in either of the two hymns under consideration.

The name 'nābhānediṣṭha', it may be noted, is perhaps an illustration of the tradition of assuming a secret name for the purposes of a sacrificial performance. It is a name that is very obviously suggested by the vicinity of the person to the vedi and which could remain a secret and produce the desired mystical effect for the purposes of the sacrifice. It is also possible that the name has been adopted by the poet on account of his constant association with the sacrificial performances as the officiating priest of the same. The poet with such close sacrificial associations is naturally well-fitted for the purposes of technical discussion of sacrifice, which he is undertaking in these hymns.

The introduction of the idea of the "mystical element" in the sacrifice is due to a desire for theorization and as such must have come into existence after the sacrifice had advanced to some extent. An element of awe and mystery must have been in existence right from the early stages of the sacrifice when it was observed how a divinity accepted a hymn and an offering and gave the desired result through the sacrifice. But the exigencies of the situation must have necessitated a progressive evolution of the idea of divinity and through it, of the sacrifice. The process of going from concrete to

42. ABI Vol. I, pp. 23-29.

abstract notions regarding the divinity must have also worked to initiate theoretical discussion about the sacrifice and thus in association with the developed notions about the spiritual aspect of the divinity, transformed the earlier element of 'mystery' into a 'mystical element' as discussed above.

It may be said that the mechanical aspect of the Brahmanic sacrifice cannot be explained on the spiritual background of the R̥gvedic sacrifice as it is sought to be explained during the course of this chapter. It should however be noted that for different reasons⁴³ the growth of the sacrifice in its theoretical and spiritual aspects stagnated by the end the period of the R̥gvedic hymns and the practical and mechanical aspects came to be magnified in importance. This change in the emphasis on the spiritual bias of the R̥gvedic sacrifice has affected the centre of divine worship which has shifted from Indra to other divinities helpful to the growth of the new ideology as it has been indicated in Chapter VII.

This deterioration can be explained on the analogy of the Gītā. Just as the hymns of the R̥gveda have tried to formulate a view about the sacrifice on an intellectual and spiritual basis, the Gītā too has propounded its view about the sacrifice.⁴⁴ The R̥gveda is gradually evolving notions of a class-system to bring some order into the social life. The Gītā has propounded a very broad idea of 'cāturvarṇya' for restoring order in the society. If the R̥gveda can be said to have laid the foundation of the Aryan culture, the Gītā has helped to stabilise it, when it was badly shaken.⁴⁵

But even as the teachings of the Gītā came to be neglected in the days that followed, so too it appears to have happened in the days of the Brāhmaṇas, which appear to have suppressed the growth of the intellectual and spiritual ideology of the R̥gveda.

43. Vide Chapter XIV.

44. BV. Vol. X, 1949 (pp. 370-77).

45. Ibid.—introduction.

Chapter Eleven

PREDOMINANTLY SACRIFICIAL HYMNS

पूर्वीर्ऋतस्य बृहतीरनूषत । (RV VIII. 52.9).

SYNOPSIS :

Particular hymns and groups in their sacrificial association to be discussed—two view-points regarding the association—dependent upon the stage of ritual growth—Dr. Deshmukh's view regarding the distinction between the two categories of ritualistic hymns criticized—some points in this regard—sacrificial purpose varying at different stages—hymns incidental to performances—*dānastutis*, some *saṁvāda* hymns, riddle-hymns—groups with clear sacrificial associations—*Vālakhilya*—*Paruccheṣa* I.127-139—*Āprīs*—*Viśvedevas*—

Hymns with composite authorship—hymns with different divinities praised in groups—hymns with sacrificial appendages without syntactical connection—hymns having lines repeated with sacrificial purpose in view—some individual hymns—a few remarks—

We discussed broadly the nature of relationship between the hymns and the sacrifice in the second chapter and observed how some hymns¹ are said to be meant for the purposes of the sacrifice. It is mainly such hymns and groups that are proposed to be described in this chapter, indicating the nature of their association with the sacrifice of the time.

As we have seen in the first two chapters, the opinions of scholars have been sharply divided on this point, some of them like Bloomfield and Oldenberg holding that all the hymns were meant for sacrificial purposes while, Max Müller and Winternitz saying that some hymns had certainly got nothing to do with the sacrifice. Dr. Deshmukh² draws the distinction between the (1) ritualistic prayer, which he calls invocation and (2) the non-ritualistic,³ which he calls laudation and gives a few illustrations of the two categories.

It may be noted that it is not an easy thing to lay down a line of demarcation between the two classes of hymns, unless we have some notion about the ritual development of those days.

Presumption about the advanced nature of that ritual has made Dr. Deshmukh agree with Prof. Macdonell in respect of the existence of the various types of sacrifices along with even the rites like *Dikṣā* and *Avabhṛtha*⁴ in the days of the *Ṛgvedic* hymns. It is for the same reason that he forwards the theory about the two classes

1. Chapter II p. 27.

2. RVL pp. 332-339.

3. Ibid. p. 338, which he considers to be the survival of the bardic age.

4. Ibid. p. 303.

of the ritualistic hymns,⁵ viz. (i) addressed to the gods directly and (ii) addressed through Agni. It is true that some hymns may have been meant to be recited like 'the Gāyatra mantra', without the accompaniment of any ritual but it should be noted that the idea of self-purification which characterizes the 'sandhya' is an idea, which has come to be associated with it at a later date when the 'mantra' was picked up out of its context and that the idea of purification resulting from the recitation of a single verse a number of times is conspicuous by its absence in the hymns of the R̥gveda. The hymns, whether the gods are invoked directly or indirectly therein, have got the same purpose in view, viz., the propitiation of the divinity and as such there is no real distinction between the two categories of the ritualistic hymns. If the distinction is to be drawn, it will have to be drawn at the root, viz., the ritual and hence it will have to be presumed that there were two types of rituals (1) with oblations and (ii) without oblations. He has however not put forth any such theory about the prayer and the sacrifice in his work and hence there is no point in distinguishing between the two categories of the ritualistic hymns.

Before trying to determine the sacrificial association of the different hymns, we shall have to bear in mind a number of points having a significant bearing on the topic.

The hymns, as a means of expression of the sentiments, impressions and aspirations of the thinker poets towards the divinities are bound to reflect faithfully the purpose in view of the composers, the only difference being that at some places it may be obvious, at other places, transparent. It may further be noted that the expression of the purpose would necessarily be related with the stage of the sacrifice existing at the time of the composition of the hymns.

Thus, at an earlier stage, when the favour of the god is expected to be attained by means of the hymns as well as the performance, both the skill in the composition as well as the emotional appeal would be expected in the hymns. When some of these hymns have become known, at a later stage, hymns similar in composition to the earlier ones would be expected. Certain circumstances accessory to the performance would also necessitate the composition of some hymns at this stage. At a still advanced stage, the compositions would be more artificial and to some extent lacking in emotional appeal, because by the time certain conventions regarding the hymns required for the purpose of a sacrifice would already come into being. Sacrifice can still be said to be growing as long as fresh hymns continue to be composed for its purpose. It can be said to have attained a rigidity when composition of new hymns has ceased and employment in the ritual takes place by portions according to

5. RVL p. 335.

the requirement or the convenience of the ritual. This stage is perceptible in the Brāhmaṇa literature and is clearly distinguishable even from the advanced stage during the period of the hymns.⁶

It may be said that this line of argument involves the fault of 'mutual dependence'⁷ inasmuch as the hymns and their employment would appear to be dependent on the stage of the sacrifice and the stage of the sacrifice would appear to be dependent on the hymns and their employment. It should however be noted that it is not so for the obvious reason that both the sides are known to us and just as we know for certain that the sacrifice had in view certain hymns, it is also known that certain hymns have clearly got the sacrificial employment in view as we shall see below.

Certain other tendencies exhibited in the hymns would also help in ascertaining the sacrificial character of the hymns as also the peculiar mode of the composition of some of them. Both the following categories of the hymns have been considered as 'predominantly sacrificial' for the purposes of the present discussion.

(A) Hymns composed on the occasion of, in commemoration of or in description of the sacrifices or some aspects thereof and as such not directly meant for employment, e.g. Dānastutis, Riddle-hymns, etc.

(B) Hymns composed for the sake of sacrificial employment. Though we cannot exactly ascertain the mode of employment of the hymns in the early stages of the sacrifice, it can be said that the compositions of fresh hymns for sacrificial performances would suggest that entire hymns used to be recited during the course of the performance. This is further supported by the occurrence of the refrains as characteristic of an individual or the family which would indicate that the hymns used to be recited till the end and would announce the role of that particular composer to the divinity.

(A) DĀNASTUTIS :

They were apparently composed generally on the occasion of a sacrificial performance to celebrate the achievement of some singular success and as such must have been associated with that performance. The idea underlying a dānastuti appears to be the acknowledgment of the receipt of the help from the gods and the gift from the patrons as can be evident from the general form in which those hymns were composed.⁸ It therefore appears that they were not employed during the course of the performance. At the same time they cannot be imagined as not associated with the celebration of the event. Hence it appears that those hymns used to be recited

6. For discussion on 'purpose' of the sacrifice see Chapter XIV.

7. itaretarāśrayatva'.

8. Vide remarks under 'Śara' in Chapter VIII, p. 188.

at the end of the performance in the presence of the assembly gathered for the purpose so that the help of the divinity and the gift of the patron could receive the maximum of publicity as desired by the poet.

IV. 15 :

The setting of the hymn does not appear to be the usual victory in the battle. It is just said to be an invitation to the priest of Vāmadeva family to officiate at a sacrifice by offering a gift for it. (bodhad yanmā haribhyām kumārah sāhadevyah | acchā na hūta udaram, v.7). It should be noted that vv.1-6 of the hymn are in praise of Agni, indicating that it was a fire-ritual that the poet has undertaken. The offering of 'prayas' is referred to in v.2, and long life for the patron is prayed for in vv. 9-10.⁹

V. 18 :

A poet from the Atri family is acknowledging the receipt of the gift of fifty horses. Svarṇara¹⁰ in v. 4, may refer to a person of that name referred to elsewhere as protected by Indra. The patrons in general are referred to (v. 3, maghonām); so the gift may be of a family of that name.

V. 27 :¹¹

The hymn by a poet of the Atri family, appears to be in acknowledgement of the gifts of different persons on different occasions. vv. 1-3 describe the gifts of Tryaruṇa of the Purukusta family on two occasions.¹² It is noteworthy that the poet is performing the ninth sacrifice of that type for him (v. 3, evā te agne sumatīm cakāno naviṣṭhāya navamaṁ trasadasyuh). vv. 4-6, describe the gift of a hundred bulls from Aśvamedha. The spotted colour of the bulls is compared with soma juices mixed with three substances.¹³ The performance appears to the usual Agni ritual.

V. 30 :

A poet of Atri family is referring to 'Rūṣama' people with 'Rṇamcaya' as their chief from whom he receives a very substantial gift of four thousand cows (repeatedly mentioned in vv. 12-15). In all these four verses the poet also refers to 'soma-juice' indicating it to be soma-ritual in honour of Indra praised above. A 'pravṛj'

9. For 'Sāhadevyā' cf. 'Sṛñjayas' in Chapter VIII; for 'prayas' cf. Chapter V p.113.
10. Vide Chapter VIII. p. 191.

11. Vide 'Pūrus' in Chapter VIII. p. 178.

12. v.1 twenty oxen and a wagon; v.2 One Hundred and twenty cows and two horses.

13. For the simile, Chapter XII; Chapter V for 'tryāsiraḥ' (pp. 103-104).

rite,¹⁴ where heated milk was offered in a golden pot is also referred to (v. 15) and it appears to be customary for the priests to receive it (*tamu ādāma viprah*).

V. 33 :

It indicates a soma ritual in honour of Indra praised in vv. 1-7 and refers to the gifts received by Samvarana from different patrons. The gifts are for sacrificial performances as indicated in v. 9b (*kratvāmaghāso vidathasya rātau* |).

V. 34 :

See under Śatri (Chapter VIII).

V. 36 :

vv. 1-5 are in praise of Indra and v.6 praises the gift of two red horses and other three hundred cattle (*rohitau vājinau..... tribhiḥ śataiḥ....*), by Śrutaratha.¹⁵

V. 61 :

Śyāvāśva, in praising Maruts, is referring to a gift of one hundred cows by Taranta. Purumīḥa's gift is referred to in v.9.¹⁶

VI. 27 :

The hymn is in honour of Indra, acknowledging a gift of Abhyavartin cyāyamāna,¹⁷ which is said to be unsurpassed (*dūpāśa*). It refers to the help received from Indra in a battle where Varasikha's descendants are said to have been killed on the banks of the river Hariyūpiyā. (v.5).

VI. 45 :

The hymn, written in honour of Indra, refers in a general way to the generous gift of Br̥bu,¹⁸ who is said to be the best among patrons giving gifts in thousands (v.33, *sūrim sahasradātamam*).

VI. 47 :

Different patrons and priests have been referred to in this hymn in honour of Indra.

Prastoka is said to be giving ten treasure-boxes and ten horses to Bharadvājas (v.22ab). It is said to be out of the gift of Indra

14. Vide Chapter VI under 'pravṛj' p. 131.

15. Vide Chapter VIII for his relation with the Aṅgirasas family.

16. Vide Chapter VIII. p. 186.

17. Vel. B.U.J. X 1941 p. 109; Chapter VIII. p. 181.

18. Vide Chapter IX. p. 195.

(rādhaste indra, 22a), indicating the victory over Dāsa princes and thus the wealth is referred to as 'śāmbara vasu' in v.22d.

Divodāsa Atithigva¹⁹ is said to have given a gift of ten horses, ten treasure boxes, ten garments, ten lumps of gold and ten chariots to Bharadvājas. He is said to have given a gift of a hundred cows to Atharvan priests²⁰ (vv. 23-24).

Aśvatha is said to have given a gift to Pāyu (v.24c).

VII. 18 :²¹

The hymn is written after the famous Dāśarājña battle, where Sudās, a king of the Bharata family won victory over the ten kings. The victory is won with the help of Indra, in whose honour the poet is writing this hymn of celebration and the details of the help received in vanquishing different enemies have been enumerated in the course of the hymn. The dānastuti in vv. 21-25 refers to the service of different persons of the family to Indra (v.21, pra ye gṛhādamamadustvāyā parāśaraḥ śatayāturvasiṣṭhaḥ |). The gift is of two hundred cows and two chariots (with mares yoked). It appears that four more horses, decorated with pearls (v.23) were also given as a gift on the occasion.

Most of the dānastutis are to be found in the eighth maṇḍala.

VIII. 3 :

The hymn is in honour of Indra (vv. 1-20) and in vv. 21-24, the gift of Pākasthāman²² is being praised as a sort of unique gift (v.24, turīyamit pākasthāmānam bhojaṁ dātāramabravam).²³ The gift is of a horse, a very speedy runner (v.21, upeva divi dhāva-mānam) and was perhaps meant to be employed in running a race as he is said to be winning wealth (rāyo vibodhanam, v.22a). He is thus said to be even better than ten horses (v.23, yasma anye daśa prati dhuraṁ vahanti vahnayaḥ).²⁴

VIII. 4 :

vv. 1-14 are in praise of Indra. vv. 15-18 refer to Pūṣan and vv. 19-21 refer to the gift of the king Kuruṅga²⁵ in the 'diviṣṭi' sacrifices.²⁶ The gift is of one hundred horses (śatāśva, v.19) and sixty-thousand cows (ṣaṣṭim sahasrā...yūthāni gavām). The poet appears to be very jubilant over the gifts as indicated by his refer-

19. Vide Chapter VIII; Vel. B.U.J. XI; 1942, p. 72 and Jubilee Volume ABORI 1942.

20. Chapter VII p. 146.

21. for Dāśarājña cf. V.I. I p. 355; Vel. JBBRAS Vol. 18, 1942.

22. Vide Chapter VIII. p. 185.

23. Vel. B.U.J. XIV 1945 p. 14 f.n.

24. Prof. Velankar construes it as a gift of ten other horses to be used for ordinary purposes.

25. Vide Chapter VIII.

26. Vide Chapter VII p. 138 Srinagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

ring to the proud possession (v.21, *gām bhajanta mehanā asvaṃ bhajanta mehanā*) and by the description that even the trees were delighted at his approach (*vrkṣāścinme abhipitve arāraṇuḥ* |).²⁷

VIII. 5 :

vv. 1-36 are in praise of Aśvins. vv. 37-39 are in praise of the gift of the Cedi people and their chief Kaśu (vide Chapter VIII).

VIII. 6 :²⁸

A Kaṇva poet, praising Indra (vv. 1-45) refers to the gift of Parśu and Tirindara,²⁹ associated with the Yadus (v.46, *rādhāmsi yādvānām*). He is said to have surpassed the Yadus in fame (v.48). The gift is of three thousand horses and ten thousand cows for a *sāman* hymn. The gift of camels referred to in v.48 (*uṣṭrāścatur-yujah*) possibly indicates the residence of the king in the desert region of the west. Perhaps he might have been a king beyond the Aryan fold who had taken to the sacrificial cult of the Aryans like the Paṇi Bṛbu.

The reference to 'sāman' indicates the sacrificial performance undertaken for the patron. It does not appear to be meant for any victory in the battle.

VIII. 19 :

vv. 1-33 praise Agni. vv. 34-35 praise Ādityas and in vv. 36-37 the *dānastuti* is given. Sobhari is praising the gift of Trasadasyu,³⁰ who is referred to as very generous (v.36, *mañhiṣṭhaḥ ariyaḥ satpatiḥ*; cf. also v.34).

v.37³¹ refers to the gift of Śyāva,³² residing on the banks of the river Suvāstu. The king is said to have contributed to the growth of the Agni worship (v.33, *tava kṣatrāṇi vardhayan* |).

VIII. 21 :

vv. 1-16 are in praise of Indra and vv. 17-18 describe the liberality of Cītra (vide Chapter VIII).³³

VIII. 24 :³⁴

vv. 1-27 are in praise of Indra. The gift of Nārya³⁵ to Vyaśva family is referred to in vv. 29-30. The *dānastuti* is addressed to Uṣas possibly because it was given at the time of dawn.

27. Vel. B.U.J. XIV 1945 p. 15 f.n.

28. Ibid p. 18.

29. Vide Chapter VIII under 'Yadus'; V.I. I pp. 310-11 and p. 504.

30. For his connection with the Agni-ritual, cf. Chapter VIII. p. 179.

31. Chapter VIII. p. 189.

32. not commented by Sāy.

33. Vel. B.V.J. XIV 1945 p. 24 f.n.

34. Ibid. p. 25

35. Vide Chapter VIII. p. 185.

VIII. 25 :

vv. 1-9 and 13-21 are in praise of Mitrāvaruṇā. vv. 22-24 form the dānastuti, referring to the gifts of Ukṣaṇyāyana, Harayāṇa and Suśāman (vide Chapter VIII).

VIII. 34 :

The hymn was apparently composed for a sacrificial performance as the refrain of vv. 1-15 would indicate. The gift of a Pārāvata king Vasurocis (v.16) to a poet of Kaṇva family consisting of one thousand horses is referred to.

VIII. 46 :

vv. 1-20 praise Indra. Vāyu is referred to in vv. 25-28, 32. vv. 21-24, 29-31 give the dānastuti.

The gifts referred to are almost fanciful. (v.22, *ṣaṣṭim sahasrāśvyasyāyūtāsanamuṣṭrāṇām vimśatiṁ śatā | daśa śyāvinām śatā tryaruṣiṇām daśa gavāṁ sahasrā ||*); also a golden chariot (v.24c). That the poet officiated at a soma sacrifice, is indicated in v.26 (*ebhiḥ somebhiḥ somasudbhiḥ somapā . . .*).

In v.32, Dāsa Balbūtha and Tarukṣa are also said to be giving the gift of a hundred. They appear to be the Dāsa associates of the king Pṛthuśravas Kāṇita.³⁶

VIII. 55-56 :

Dasyavevṛka,³⁷ the son of Pūtakrata and his wife Pūtakratā is praised in these two dānastutis by two different poets of the Kaṇva family. The hymns are intimately connected with each other and apparently one has been fashioned on the pattern of the other. As the help of Indra is referred to (55-1), it appears to be in connection with the victory in a battle. The name of the patron ('wolf to the dasyu') would indicate that it was a memorable victory over the Dasyus, a number of whom appear to be killed without resistance. It may be noted that the gifts in both the hymns are mentioned as being in 'hundreds' (cf. 55.2, *śataṁ śvetāso . . . śataṁ veṇūn* etc.; 56.3, *śataṁ dāsān* etc.) which appears to be a peculiarity of the award.

VIII. 68 :

vv. 1-13 are in praise of Indra. Priyamedha of the Aṅgiras family is said to be receiving gifts from Ṛkṣa and his son Āśvamedha, as

36. V.33 is also supposed to refer to a gift of a woman by Geldner (Der Rigveda Vol. II, p. 366 f.n.) and Ludwig thinks that she was the wife of the conquered king.

37. Chapter VIII. p. 185.

VIII. 70 :

vv. 1-12 praise Indra and vv. 13-15 give dānastuti of Śara (vide Chapter VIII).

VIII. 74 :

vv. 1-12 praise Agni and in vv. 13-14, a poet of the Atri family is referring to a gift of Śrutarvan and/or Saviṣṭha, who is referred to as the unexcelled donor (nemāpo aśvadātaraḥ śaviṣṭhādasti martyaḥ | v.15).³⁹

IX. 58 :

vv. 3-4 refer to certain gifts in thousands of Dhvasra and Puru-
ṣanti. It is not a regular dānastuti.

X. 33 :

The hymn would be a type by itself. It is addressed to Upamaśravas whose two ancestors also have been mentioned.⁴⁰ The gift praised is of Kuruśravaṇa (v.5), who is said to be giving gifts in thousands (sahasradakṣiṇe). It appears to be a posthumous praise meant to acknowledge the gift and also to offer consolations to the son (v.9, na devānāmati vrataṁ śātātmā ca na jīvati | tathā yujā vi vavṛte ||), which he does by remarking that none lives for a hundred years and adding that it was a loss to him to lose his (royal) friend.

X. 62 :

The gift of Sāvārṇi or Sāvārṇya is referred to as being in thousands and hundreds (sahasram...śatāśvaṁ) and in general to be very extensive as indicated by the simile (v.9, sindhuriva paprathe |). In brightness it is compared with the sun (v.10, sūryeṇa yatamānā) and the poet prays for a long life for him (v.11, devā prātiranta āyuh).

X. 93 :

The hymn mentions a number of patrons Duḥśīma, Pṛthavāna, Vena and Rāma who appear to have given a gift of five hundred horses or chariots together. The poet refers to their gift touchingly

38. According to Sāyana, the sacrifice was started by the first pair and the other two attending as witnesses were inspired to give gifts. For a different view, cf. Vel. B.U.J. XV 1946 p. 25 fn.; cf. also Chapter VIII under the names concerned.

39. Vide Chapter VIII. p. 189.

40. Vide Chapter VIII, p. 179.

as being out of love for him (v.14, *asmayu pāthā viśrāvyēṣām*). It is not clear what the gift was meant for.⁴¹

RIDDLE HYMNS :⁴²

I.164 and VIII.29 are typical hymns, containing riddles, the solutions of some of which are pretty simple. VIII.29 presents merely certain characteristic attributes of some divinities and the priestly family of the Aṅgirasas (v.10). I.164 contains some riddle verses (2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 29, etc.). v.35 written in answer to questions posed in the preceding stanza contains some interesting statements about the sacrifice (*iyam vedit̥h paro anto pṛthivyāḥ, ayam yajño bhuvanasya nābhiḥ*), where 'vedi' is said to be farthest extremity of the earth and the sacrifice, the centre of the whole creation. In v.50 (*divam jinvanti agnayaḥ*), the dependence of gods on the sacrifices is indicated.

It is possible that such hymns were composed at the time of the sacrificial performances though we do not get any exact idea as to how they were utilised at the time.

DIALOGUE HYMNS :⁴³

Some of them⁴⁴ appear to be composed with the background of the sacrifice. The predominance of Indra in shaping the sacrifice can be observed in most of these hymns. They either seek to centre the attention on Indra in the sacrifice or stress in general his superiority over others.

Thus in I.165, with a dialogue between Indra and Maruts, the clash in the worship of the two is indicated and the preferential treatment given to Indra justified.

I.170 clarifies the background of the previous hymn (I.165), by making Agastya plead for a share for Maruts, which they are deprived of on account of the predominance of Indra.

III.33, containing the dialogue between Viśvāmitra and the rivers, has the background of the influence of Indra on the rivers.⁴⁵ The rivers glorifyingly refer to it (v.6, *indro asmān aradad vajra-bāhuḥ*) and the poet also does it (v.7, *pravācyam śāsavadhā viryam tat...*).

41. According to Ludwig, the gift was for reconciling the nobles and the people who had quarrelled (cf. HRG II. p. 526 f.n.).

42. HIL I p. 118; RVB p. 217.

43. V. H. S.B.E. Vol. 32, pp. 182-84.

44. X. 10, 17, 95, 135 however cannot be said to have any connection with the sacrifice.

45. cf. Chapter X, regarding the view about the magical character of the hymn.

VIII.100⁴⁶ dramatises the event of the sharing of soma between Indra and Viṣṇu and the visit in person to the poet in virtue of his hymn.

In VIII.91, with a dialogue between Indra and Apālā, the importance of devotional attitude in the sacrificial worship is indicated.⁴⁷

In X.29, by the conversation between Indra and Vasukra, the importance of Indra's presence in the sacrifice has been emphasized and his greatness is glorified.

X.98, see below.

X.108 has the background of the importance of Indra, under whose orders Saramā has gone to the Paṇis (v.2, indrasya dūtīriṣitā carāmi) and whose greatness she is glorifying (v.4, nāhaṁ taṁ veda dabhyā dabhatsaḥ). Though conversational interest dominates the hymn, the emphasis on the greatness of Indra and the mention of the priests Angirasas (v.10), as also that of soma and the pressing-stones (v.11), indicates sacrifice as the background of the hymn. A similar emphasis is also seen in the dialogue between Indra and Indrāṇī in X.86.

In X.167 (1-3), soma offering is dramatised by the dialogue between Indra, Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni and the acceptance of the same is indicated in v.4.

B

There are four groups of hymns, having clear sacrificial association: (1) Āprī (2) Viśvedevas (3) Parucchepa, I.127-139, (4) Vālahilya (VIII.49-59). Groups (1), (3) and (4) are characterized by a typical construction.

(1) ĀPRĪ GROUP :⁴⁸

This group is quite compact in form and contents and apparently signifies a typical family ritual of a general character. A close analysis of the hymns reveals the fact that the hymns have in view the metaphorical description of a general sacrificial performance and that the R̥gveda hymns never appear to have envisaged eleven independent deities. It is also pointed out how the hymns could have no connection with the Prayāja offerings of an animal sacrifice, with which they appear to be connected on account of the specific number of the stanzas. It is also possible to imagine that the Prayājas came to be fixed as eleven on account of the eleven stanzas of the

46. Vel. B.U.J. XVI 1947 p. 17-18 f.n.

47. RBV 1952, pp. 61-63; for a similar idea cf. Chapter V. p.

48. cf. AHR. B.U.J. IXV 1945 and XV 1946, where the problem of the Āprī hymns has been discussed in details after thoroughly analysing the contents of the hymns. The hymns in the group are I.13, 188, II.3, III.4, V.5, VII.2, IX.5, X.70, 110.

Āprī hymns. It is known that the Prayājas are said to be seven at places. It appears to be due perhaps to the fact of the tradition of the Āprī ritual with seven verses. In this connection, it may be noted that in the Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra Āpris, vv.8-11 are common, indicating the borrowing of the one from the other. It may be due to the association with the Bharata family as indicated by us. But it is clear that one of the families composed only seven verses. It is this survival of the tradition of seven verses in the Āprī hymn of some family that appears to have originated the idea of seven Prayājas. Thus this would be a clear illustration as to how the Brāhmaṇa literature was adapting itself to the available material from the Ṛgveda hymns.⁴⁹

(2) VIŚVEDEVAS :

We have discussed⁵⁰ the circumstances under which the idea of this group of divinities appears to have come into existence. Accordingly it would appear that the hymns must have been composed to glorify the individual divinities in certain groups or collectively without specification of individuals, mainly for purposes of employment in certain rites of a very general character.

When the ritual came to be associated with a particular family (as in the case of the Āpris) or a group in the family (as in the case of the Vāḷakhilya or Paruccheпа groups), there was ample scope for the ritual to attain a stereotyped form. But as the Viśvedeva group had no such family associations, it does not appear to have developed any ritual of its own. Even like the designation of their group, they appear to have maintained the ritual tradition of a universal character. This becomes evident from the form of some Viśvedevas' hymns like I.89, 90; V.46,⁵¹ VII.35, where most of the divinities of the vedic pantheon along with some of their groups have been referred to. VII.35 is typical of the group indicating its association with the ritual by the mode of expression, resorted to therein. All the divinities and the deified entities are expected to give blessings (cf. 'śam naḥ' repeated with all in vv.1-13).

(3) PARUCHEPA GROUP⁵² (I.127-139) :

The composition of this group of hymns is highly artificial in character. Practically all the important deities are represented in the group. Agni 127-128; Indra 129-133; Vāyu 134-135; Mitrā-varuṇā 136-137; Pūṣan 138; Viśvedevas 139.

49. cf. 'prayājas' in Chapter VI. p. 131.

50. Chapter III, p. 59-61.

51. cf. Chapter VI. p. 135 for comments on the hymn.

52. cf. Geldner Vol. I, p. 175 complains about the 'uncertainty' and 'colourlessness' of the hymns, which present difficulty to the translator'; HRG I p. 175 f.n. "generally very obscure and frequently unintelligible."

All the hymns⁵³ follow a definite pattern of composition viz. to repeat certain words or groups of words in the first and the third lines at certain regulated intervals. The repetition of these words appears to be mainly literary in character, meant to produce some alliterative effect and occasionally emphasize a point here and there. It does not appear to have any magical effect in view as in VII.55 (ni ṣu svapa). As in the case of the four groups of the Vālakhilya hymns, repetition with a certain change is resorted to, possibly out of a desire to imitate an earlier composition, which had attained some sacrificial importance.

(4) VĀLLAKHILYA GROUP :⁵⁴

All the hymns are supposed to have been composed by the members of the Kaṇva family. It is not quite clear as to why they should have been considered as appended to the R̥gvedic collection, particularly when they are placed in the midst of the eighth maṇḍala (Nos. 49-59). The reason is not their artificial composition in parts, because the Parucchepa group is more artificial in that respect.

Thus hymns 49-50 contain ten stanzas each, every stanza of the one agreeing with the corresponding one in the other in the employment of the majority of the words. Hymns 51-52 agree with each other in the same way as the preceding pair. Hymns 53-54 contain eight verses each and are connected with each other in a general way. Hymns 55-56 contain dānastutis in five stanzas each of one single patron (vide 'dānastutis' above). Hymn 58 is fragmentary in character. Hymns 57 and 59 are independent.

The construction of the four groups of hymns gives clear indications that one of them had attained some sacrificial significance and hence with the idea of maintaining a similar effect, the hymn was almost maintained intact in its imitation, though certain words were substituted to give the latter an appearance of a new hymn. Thus the same idea that prompted the authors of the Āpri hymns in the different families to imitate each other also appears to have prompted a limited group of poets in the Kaṇva family. It is obviously some ritual.

HYMNS WITH COMPOSITE AUTHORSHIP :

According to Anuk. there are a few hymns, where different stanzas are said to be composed by different poets. Thus in IX.109, first four triplets are ascribed to 'Śyāvaśvi', 'Nāhuṣa yayāti', 'Nāhuṣa Mānava' and 'Sāmvaraṇa Manu' and the last four verses to Viśvāmitra. The cases of X.136 and 137 are more interesting. In both

53. except 133(1-5), which looks like a magical charm.

54. Vel. B.U.J. XV 1946 p. 11 f.n. "the purpose of such a construction was evidently sacrificial though its exact nature is not very clear." RRB Vol. II.

of them, each one of the seven stanzas is ascribed to a different poet. No. 137 is magical in character. We do not know what tradition the author of the Anuk. had for assigning different verses to different poets of different families, particularly when it is remembered that he had on occasions to pick up some name in the hymn to designate the author,⁵⁵ indicating that in those cases no tradition was available to him. If however they are really of composite authorship, they must be having some ritual basis.

Hymns with different deities, praised in groups in some order:

When we come across hymns of this character, it would appear that this was done with the purpose of observing a regulated form of ritual, because otherwise, the poet could have praised the divinities concerned in independent hymns. We cannot be certain about the nature of the ritual.⁵⁶

Thus, in:

I.2, vv. 1-3, Vāyu; 4-6, Indrāvāyū; 7-9 Mitrāvaruṇā.

I.3, vv. 1-3, Aśvins; 4-6, Indra; 7-9, Viśvedevas; 10-12, Saraswatī.

I.15,⁵⁷ various deities are referred to in one or more stanzas each. The hymn has in view some ritual of a composite character. In vv. 5-6, the word 'ṛtu' does not stand for any cup, particularly as the 'brāhmaṇa' cup is referred to in v.5 (as in II.36.5), indicating it is not the ritual of later 'ṛtugrahas'. cf. similarly I.22, 23,⁵⁸ 24, 43; II.32; VIII.101.

III.62 praises different deities in three verses each. It is possible that independent hymns are combined here together in one hymn. cf. similarly VIII.26, X.17, 24.

IV.46, 47 praise Vāyu in one stanza and Indrāvāyū in the rest of the hymn. cf. similarly VII.90, 91, 92.

VII.60, 62 and 63 similarly praise Sūrya and Mitrāvaruṇā.

Hymns with portions appended at the end of the verses without syntactical connection :

There are a number of hymns with portions appended to all the verses therein some of which appear to be clearly appended for some kind of sacrificial employment. It may be noted that in all those hymns, the sense of the stanzas appears complete without those appendages. In a number of hymns again, the appendages cannot really be construed with the previous portion of the verses.

55. cf. particularly in the tenth maṇḍala: Nos. 139, 144, 165 etc.

56. cf. VMH I p. 259, where the agreement in form with Brāhmaṇa ritual is indicated. It must however be a case of adaptation as indicated by Prof. Renou (LEV. p. 5) quoted in Chapter I above p. 10.

57. RLH. 131; Der RigVeda I p. 15.

58. VMH I p. 256, where later ritual is sought to be explained in I. 2, 3, 23, 136 and II.41.

I.82 (vv. 1-5) adds 'yojā nu indra te hari', apparently with the idea of invoking Indra to attend a sacrificial performance. It is possible that the portion was repeated at the time of making the offering after the verses concerned were recited.

I.105 adds 'vittam me asya rodasī' though it is a 'Viśvedeva' hymn, indicating the employment of the hymn in the ritual of the joint divinity 'Rodasī'.

V.6 (vv. 1-10): As in I.82 'iṣam stotrbhya ābhara' appears to emphasize the point on the divinity after the offerings were made.

V.75 (vv. 1-9) : All the verses add 'mādhvī mama śrutam havam', without much connection with the previous portion and as such appear to be meant for emphasizing the invocation.

VIII.39, 40, 41, 42 : 'nabhantāmanyake same' as in X.126.

In VIII.47, 'anehaso va ūtayaḥ, su ūtayo va ūtayaḥ' and in VIII.62 'bhadṛā indrasya rātayaḥ' appear to be recited as a sort of chorus after the offerings were made as in I.82 above.

In IX.112, 113, 114, 'indrāya indo pari srava' appears to be added while pressing out the soma juice.

In X.126, 'ati dviṣaḥ' seems to be added possibly with the idea of keeping away the enemies.

X.134 : Though addressed to Indra, emphasizes 'devī janitryaji-janat, bhadṛā janitryaji-janat', possibly with the idea of accommodating Aditi in the Indra-ritual.

X.187 adds 'sā naḥ parṣad ati dviṣaḥ' as in X.126.

As a sort of magical chant the following four hymns have their appendages : VII.50(1-3) 'mā mām padyena rapasā vidatsaruḥ'.

VII.55 (2-4) : 'ni ṣu svapa'.

X.133 : 'nabhantāmanyakeṣām jyākā adhi dhanvasu'.

X.182 (1-3) : 'kṣipadaśastimapa durmatim hannathā karadyajamānāya śam yoḥ'.

In the following hymns the purpose of appendages appears to be literary :

I.80 : 'arcannanu svarājyam'.

I.84 : 'vasvīranu svarājyam'.

V.79 : 'sujāte aśvasūṇṛte'.

X.86 : 'viśvasmāndindra uttarah'.

Hymns having a line or two repeated as refrain in all or some stanzas and having some connection with the sacrifice :

(1) The idea of invocation is prominent in the following refrains:—

- I.29(1-7), 'ā tū na indra śamsaya'.
 I.78(1-5), 'dyumnairabhi praṇonumah'.
 I.112(1-23), 'tābhirū ṣu ūtibhiraśvināgatam'.
 V.51(8-10), 'āyāhyagne atrivatsutareṇa'.
 VIII.35(7-9),⁵⁹ 'trirvartiryātamaśvinā'.
 (13-15), 'ādityairyātamaśvinā'.
 VIII.86(1-3) 'tā vām viśvako havate tanūkrthe'.
 VIII.93(25-27), 'stotr̥bhya indramāvaha'.
 (31-33), 'upa no haribhiḥ sutam'.
 X.35(3-12), 'svastyagnim samidhānamīmahe'.
 X.36(2-12), 'taddevāmāmavo adyā vṛṇīmahe'.
 X.100(1-11), 'ā sarvatātīmaditīm vṛṇīmahe'.

(2) The following refrains request the divinities to grant protection, etc.:—

- I.94(1-14), 'agne sakhye mā riśāmā vayan tava'.
 I.100(1-15), 'marutvānno bhava indra ūtī'.
 VII.49(1-4), 'tā āpo devīriha māmavantu'.
 VII.89(1-4), 'mṛlā suksatra mṛlaya'.
 VIII.73(1-8), 'anti śadbhūtu vāmavaḥ'.
 VIII.93(28-30), 'yadindra mṛlayāsi naḥ'.
 IX.4(1-10), 'athā no vasyasaskṛdhi'.
 IX.65(28-30), 'pānta mā puruspr̥ham'.
 X.47(1-8), 'asmabhyam citram vṛṣaṇam rayim dāḥ'.
 X.62(1-4), 'prati gr̥bhṇīta mānavam sumedhasaḥ'.

(3) The following refrains request the divinities to accept the offerings:—

- I.108(1, 5-12), 'tebhiḥ somasya pibatam sutasya'.
 IV.48(1-4), 'yāhi sutasya pītaye'.
 V.72(1-3), 'ni barhiṣi sadatam somapītaye'.
 V.78(1-3), 'hamsāviva patatamā sutān upa'.
 VI.43(1-4), 'ayam sa soma indra te sutaḥ piba'.
 VIII.35(1-3), 'somaḥ pibatamaśvinā'.
 VIII.82(7-9), 'pibedasya tvamīśiṣe'.
 VIII.85(1-9), 'madhvaḥ somasya pītaye'.
 VIII.93(31-33), 'upa no haribhiḥ sutam'.
 VIII.94(10-12), 'asya somasya pītaye'.

59. It is possible that the hymn is made up of small hymns of three verses each (1-3), (4-6) etc.

(4) The following refrains emphasize certain facts about the divinities, their mutual relationship, etc., and as such are mainly literary in character; but they might have been used in the sacrifices to glorify the divinities concerned:—

I.96(-8), 'devā agniṁ dhārayan draviṇodām'.

I.187(8-10), 'vātāpe pīva idbhava'.

II.12(1-14), 'sa janāsa indrah'.

II.22(1-3), 'sainam saścad...indram satya induh'.

III.55(1-22), 'mahaddevānāmasuratvamekam'.

V.40(1-3), 'vṛṣannindra vṛṣabhirvṛtrahantama'.

V.55(1-9), 'śubham yātāmanu rathā avṛtsata'.

VIII.12(25-27), 'āditte haryata harī vavakṣatuh'.

(28-30), 'āditte viśvā bhuvanāni yemire'.

VIII.31(15-18), 'devānām ya inmano yajamāna iyakṣatyabhi-dayajvano bhuvat'.

VIII.34(1-15), 'divo amuṣya śāsato divam yaya divāvaso'.

IX.18(1-7), 'madeṣu sarvadhā asi'.

IX.58(1-4), 'tarat sa mandī dhāvati'.

IX.67(10-12), 'ā bhakṣat kanyāsu naḥ'.

X.119(1-13), 'kuvitsomasyāpāmiti'.

Individual hymns, having a bearing on sacrifice :

I.28 : The hymn appears to be employed at the time of the pressing of the soma-juice. The alternative method of pressing out the soma juice with the mortar and pestle (ulūkhala, vv.1-6; vanaspati, vv.6-8) and the churning rod (manthā, v.5) is referred to.⁶⁰

I.162.⁶¹

Besides the vessels and implements used in other performances, described in Chapter V, this hymn refers to some, which appear to be used exclusively in the Aśvamedha. They are (v.13) 'ukhā', 'nikṣaṇa', 'āsecana pātra', 'ūṣmaṇyā', 'carūnāmapidhānā', 'ankāḥ', 'sūnāḥ'.

It may be noted that the idea of getting sovereignty through the sacrifice is definitely a later stage in the growth of the idea of sacrifice in the Rgveda. It is also indicated by the fact that the hymn presupposes the advanced stage of political consciousness and institution, which can be imagined to have come into existence only after the Aryan society had enjoyed a fairly stabilised condition of existence.

60. cf. Chapter V 'pressing of the soma juice'.

61. VMH III. 271, 334, 401; ASL pp. 292-294; ABI p. 12; Chapter X above.

It is further supported by the reference in the hymn to a specialised technique which is absent in the other sacrificial hymns and hence it can be safely concluded that the hymn belongs to the stage of sacrifice nearer to the Brāhmanic speculations about it.

II.15 : With all the verses emphasizing in their refrain (*somasya tā mada indraścakāra*) the fact of Indra doing all the heroic deeds under the influence of soma, appears to be composed for the occasion of soma-pressing meant for Indra.

II.36.37 :⁶²

The hymns have apparently got a particular ritual in view, where different priests would offer soma to different divinities with vessels designated after them.⁶³ As the divinities have been requested to accept the soma-juice in a particular order, the hymns appear to be employed in a ritual connected with those divinities.

III.8 :⁶⁴

Like *Āprīś*, this hymn is placed in the Agni group, indicating its connection mainly with the Agni worship. The sacrificial post is referred to by the word 'vanaspati' here (and not *yūpa*) and a number of other smaller posts have been referred to (*svarus*).⁶⁵ It should be noted that there is no reference to the sacrificial beast or beasts here, though the word is elsewhere associated with the beast (*ibid*, p. 76).⁶⁶ The reference to gods in general in v.8 (*sajośaso yajñamavantu devā ūrdhvaṁ kṛnvantu adhvarasya ketuṁ* |) would indicate that the performance in view was a sort of the generalised performance and the purpose of the hymn was to glorify the post or posts at the place of the sacrifice.

III.21 :⁶⁷

As *Sāyaṇa* notes in his *Bhāṣya*, this hymn appears to be employed in an animal sacrifice. In all the verses, the drops of fat are referred to as offered in fire, without mentioning any particular gods. Agni is asked to give the share to each divinity (v.5, *prati tān devaśo vihi*).

III.28, 52 :⁶⁸

The hymns appear to be composed for a general 'savana' ritual when soma and 'puroḍāśa' were offered in Agni (28.1-5) or Indra

62. RRG p. 233; RVO p. 451.

63. Vide *hotra*, *potra* etc. in Chapter IV. p. 92.

64. ABI Vol. II, p. 74-78; Geldner I p. 345 f.n. (for an idea of a spirit of competition indicated in the composition).

65. Vide under 'Yūpa' and 'Svarus' in Chapter IV (pp. 76-79).

66. V.2.7, IV.6.3 etc.

67. cf. under 'animal offering' Chapter V p. 117 and 'animal sacrifice' Chapter VI. pp. 135-37.

68. Vide ASL p. 260 written by a priest and not a poet for the three *savanas*'.

(52.1-8). Even the 'tiroahnya' soma is said to be offered to Agni (28.6) and he is said to take it to gods (28.5).

If the animal-sacrifice were associated with the soma ritual, this was the place where it could have been referred to. But there is no trace of it here as far as this specialised soma-ritual is concerned.⁶⁹

III.29 :

The hymn was possibly used at the time of churning the sacrificial fire at a late date⁷⁰ in the R̥gvedic sacrifice.

vv. 1-2, would appear like spoken in a chorus or spoken by the leader of the group of the sacrificing priests. The leader appears to be addressing the others occasionally (vv.3, 5, 8), requesting Agni to occupy the seat in the place of the sacrifice (vv.4, 8, 10) and carry out successfully the sacrificial performance (v.12), as he is the hotṛ of the sacrifice (v.16).

IV.3, 5 :

Both the hymns appear to have some mystical significance in view as far as the Agni ritual is concerned.⁷¹ The poet of IV.3 refers to it in v.16 (etā viśvā viduṣe tubhyaṁ vedho nīhānyagne niṇyā vacāmsi | nivacanāni kavaye kāvyānyāśamsiṣaṁ matibhirvipra ukthaiḥ ||), where intelligent (kāvyāni), decisive (nivacanāni), secret words (niṇyā vacāmsi) have been referred to as addressed to Agni. The poet of IV.5 refers to his hymn as a doubly powerful sāmān hymn, which was a secret revealed to him by Agni (sāma dvibarhāḥpadam na gorapagūḷhaṁ vividvān agnirmahyaṁ predu vocan-manīṣam | (v.3)).

IV.58 :⁷²

The hymn describes the mystical production and role of the 'ghṛta' as it is offered as an offering in the fire (v.8). The secret name of the ghṛta in the sacrifice is referred to in v.1 and it is said to be glorified in the sacrifice in v.2. By offering the sacrifice with the ghṛta, the poet expects to enjoy the delight of testing the drink of fire (v.11, tamaśyāma madhumantaṁ ta ūrmim).

V.46 appears to be written for a typical Viśvedeva ritual.⁷³

69. Vide 'animal sacrifice' in Chapter VI. pp. 135-37.

70. The hymn breaks the descending order and is the last in the Agni group in the third maṇḍala.

71. Vide Chapter X. p. 218.

72. VMH I.321-22; for vv.1-3, cf. Chapter X p. 215.

73. Vide Chapter VI p. 135.

VI.43 :

Having all the verses ending with 'ayam sa soma indra te sutaḥ piba', the hymn appears to be employed for the offering of soma-juice to Indra.

VI.44(1-3) :⁷⁴

Having as the refrain 'somaḥ sutaḥ sa indra te asti svadhāpate madaḥ' the three verses appear to be employed for recitation after the soma juice was pressed out and when Indra was being propitiated for arrival at the place of the sacrifice.

VII.33 :

The hymn, seeking to glorify the miraculous birth of Vasiṣṭha and his achievement in the famous Dāśarājña battle appears to be composed on the occasion of some family ritual in honour of Indra.

VII.103 :

The maṇḍūkā sūkta appears to be written on the occasion of a performance called 'sahasrasāva',⁷⁵ a typical performance to be undertaken possibly after a thousand pressings were over. It is possible that the performance of the rite synchronised with the beginning of the rainy season (v.7, saṁvatsarasya tadahaḥ pariṣṭha yanmaṇḍūkā prāvṛṣṇam babhūva; v.9, saṁvatsare prāvṛṣi āgatāyām) and hence the elaborate comparison drawn between the frogs and the brahmins in the course of the entire hymn. It may be noted that the frogs have been requested to give the wealth here as Aṅgirasas in the third maṇḍala, the wording being almost identical.⁷⁶ So it would appear that just as the Aṅgirasas are glorified in III.53, the frogs also are glorified in VII.103. The comparison of the frogs with the brahmins is never lost sight of by the poet and hence like the brahmins (at III.53) they also come to be deified at VII.103 and as such the identical request. It requires a little stretching of the imagination to understand 'rain' to be the intermediate stage as it leads to prosperity asked for. It is a simpler way of understanding therefore to construe the present hymn as praising the deified frogs, who would give wealth as the deified human beings 'Aṅgirasas' (at III.53). As the rite is referred to at these two places, it is not improbable that it was a ritual associated with the Bharata

74. Coming at the end of the Indra group, the hymn which breaks the descending order, appears to be composed of small independent hymns, of which (1-3) might be one.

75. Vide Chapter VI. p. 133.

76. cf. III.53.7 ime bhojā divasputrāso asurasya virāḥ | viśvāmitrāya dadato maghāni sahasrasāve pratiranta āyuh || and VII.103.10 (gomāyuradādamāyuradāt prṣṇiradād harito no vasūni | gavām maṇḍūkā dadataḥ śatāni sahasrasāve pratiranta āyuh ||).

family and hence both Viśvāmitra and Vasiṣṭha come to be connected with it.

For a hymn directly employed for a rainfall, cf. X.98 below.

VIII.31 :

Composed of three different parts,⁷⁷ the hymn appears to be meant for encouraging the sacrificers by describing their success in general (vv.1-9) and their getting the better of the non-sacrificers (vv. 15-18, *devānām ya inmano yajamāna iyakṣatyabhīdayajvano bhuvat* |).

VIII. 35 :

vv.1-21 appear to be meant for employment in a ritual where Aśvins, Uṣas and Sūrya are together offered the soma juice (cf. the refrain: *sajoṣasā uṣasā sūryeṇa ca*). Thus they are requested to drink soma (vv. 1-3), bring food (vv. 4-6, 10-12), to receive 'tiroanhya' (vv. 19-21) and give gifts (vv. 22-24). It appears to be a predominantly Aśvin ritual as reference to 'tiroanhya'⁷⁸ may indicate.

VIII. 36 :

Almost five-sixth portion of every one of the six stanzas is repeated as a refrain and the hymn appears to be employed at the time of making soma-offering (as indicated by '*pibā somam madāya*') to Indra and Maruts (*marutvān indra*, vv.1-6).

VIII. 37 :

In contradistinction with the preceding hymn employed in a general soma-rite, this hymn appears to be employed specifically for the Mādhyandina savana⁷⁹ in honour of Indra as indicated by the refrain of all the verses (1-6, *mādhyandinasya savanasya vṛtrahan anedya pibā somasya vajrivah.*)

VIII. 38 :

With '*indrāgnī tasya bodhataṁ*' (vv. 1-3), '*indrāgnī āgataṁ narā*' (vv. 4-6), and '*indrāgnī somapīṭaye*' (vv. 7-9) as refrains, all of which are in the gāyatrī metre, the poet refers to his hymn as 'gāyatra' (v.10, *yābhyām gāyatramrcyate*), perhaps indicating that a peculiar 'gāyatra' hymn of some sacrificial importance was supposed to be made of three units of three gāyatrī verses each.⁸⁰

77. Geldner: II p. 341.

78. Vide Chapter V p. 105.

79. exclusively reserved for Indra—Vide Chapter V. p. 107.

80. cf. VIII.76 below; also Chapter II p. 28.

VIII. 76 :

The poet refers to his hymn as a hymn of sacrificial importance (v.12, *ṛtaspr̥sam*) and names it as 'aṣṭāpadi' (*vācamāṣṭāpadīmahaṃ navasraktim*). vv.1-9 are made of three units of three stanzas each and as each unit is made up of nine lines each, it is described as 'navasrakti'. The difference between 'aṣṭāpadi' and the 'gāyatra' above appears to be that in the latter only the three units were emphasized, while in the former, each pāda with eight syllables was emphasized, as is also indicated by the description of the hymn as 'navasrakti' (meaning nine lines of eight syllables each) and hence the hymn has come to be designated as 'aṣṭāpadi'.⁸¹ It is also an Indra-marut-ritual as indicated by reference to the two divinities as also the offering of the soma-juice (vv. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 etc.).

SOMA HYMNS IN THE NINTH MAṆḌALA :

Though the separate collection of soma hymns may indicate the predominance of the soma sacrifice, they do not appear to be composed for the sake of employment in the sacrificial performance. In general the hymns describe the process of the pressing and storing of the soma-juice and do not give an impression of their being intended for any mechanical employment.

As observed above, IX. 112, 113 and 114 have 'indrāya indo parisrava' appended to the verses therein and as such were possibly employed at the time of the pressing of the soma-juice. It may be noted that in IX.112, the appendage has no connection whatsoever, with the preceding portion of the hymn. The compiler has apparently included it into the maṇḍala on account of the appendage. This would further mean that the hymn was previously in use as a soma hymn before the stage of compilation. It is quite clear that this was done for some sacrificial purpose.

X. 13 :⁸²

Like the pressing stones, the carts used for carrying the soma plant are glorified in this hymn. v.3, possibly has some mystical significance in view.⁸³ v.4 does not appear to have any connection with the previous stanza. v.5 possibly makes a bare reference to the two carts. The simile in v.1 (*yame iva yatamāne*) indicates the two carts were exactly of the same size.

X. 30 :

Waters used for the pressing of the soma juice (vide Chapter V. p. 102) have been glorified here. The hymn is said to be pro-

81. Vide Chapter II, p. 31.

82. Geldner Vol. III, pp. 140-142.

83. Vide Chapter X, p. 217.

ceeding towards them (v.1). Soma is said to be delighted by them (v.5, yābhiḥ somo madate harṣate ca) and they are said to be purified for the sacrifice. Their stream is said to be directed towards soma (v.9) and they are requested to urge on the sacrifice and prayer (v.11 hinotā no adhvaraṃ devayajyā, hinota brahma).

X. 35 :

The repetition of 'svasti agnim samidhānamīmahe' (vv. 3-12) may indicate that the verses of the hymn were recited while the offerings were poured in the sacrifice or the hymn was meant to praise Agni so that he might bring Viśvedevas, referred to in the hymn. The requirements of the generalised sacrifice have been indicated in v.9 (adveṣo adya barhiṣaḥ starīmaṇi grāvṇām yoge manmanaḥ sādha īmahe ||), where they are said to be (1) barhis (2) grāvan and (3) manma (hymn). The ritual is said to be the exponent of 'ṛta' as human beings thought it to be (v.8, pipartu mā tadṛtasya pravācanaṃ devānām yanmanuṣyā amanmahi). All the gods are requested to guard the sacrificial performance for prosperity (v.11, vṛdhe no yajñamavatā sajoṣasaḥ ||). Faith in the sacrifice as capable of leading one across all the difficulties is indicated at the end (v.14, yaṃ devāso'vatha vājasātau yaṃ trāyadhve yaṃ pipṛthātyamhaḥ | yo vo gopīthe na bhayasya veda te syāma devavitāye turāsaḥ ||).

X. 61-62 :⁸⁴

Haug remarks (p. 28) about the hymns that they are "speculations on the mystical meaning of the sacrificial rites". The hymns are apparently sacrificial in character but there is no further evidence to support the mystical significance of the later ritual that he sees therein. For X.61, see Chapter X, p. above. For X.62 (7-11) see under 'dānastuti' above.

Prof. Macdonell⁸⁵ sees magical note in the description of the Aṅgirasas in X.62.3 (ye ṛtena sūryamārohayān divi aprathayan pṛthivīm mātaraṃ ca ||). The line taken out of its context may create an impression that the sacrifice has achieved the cosmological function independently of the gods. But in v.1, the Aṅgirasas are said to have attained the friendship of Indra (indrasya sakhyamamṛta-tvamānaḥ ||) and as such their deeds are apparently due to the blessings of Indra.⁸⁶ It can also be seen that the sacrifice in general is being glorified in order that the 'dānastuti' (7-11) may be appended. Besides the priests are expected to get blessings (bhadram v.1), long life (v.2, dīrghāyutvam) and good progeny (v.3, suprajāstvam) indicating that they had not got those things. Even though they may

84. ABI pp. 23-28; Ved. Stu. I (71-77); Geldner III pp. 225-232.

85. Chapter X pp. 211-213; ERE Vol. 8 (311-21).

86. Vide Chapter VII under Aṅgirasas (p. 144).

have been referred to as 'devaputra' (v.4b), indicating very ancient origin, composition of good hymns is said to be characteristic of them (v.4, 'subrahmanyam'),⁸⁷ which would suggest that the priestly glory was dependent on the composition of good hymns.

X. 76, 94, 175 :

The three 'grāva-sūktas' (hymns to the pressing stones) were apparently written after the sacrifice had attained great prominence. Ordinary soma-pressing is indicated in X.76.1 (vyuṣṭiṣu... sadaḥ sadaḥ...). At 76.3, soma mixed with milk is referred to as 'tvāṣṭra', belonging to Tvaṣṭr.⁸⁸ The comparison of the pressing stone with 'heaven', 'Vibhvan'⁸⁹ (in v.5) is interesting.

X. 94 describes the role of the pressing stones in the sacrifice in a very interesting way. As they pound the branches of the soma plant, they are compared with bullocks eating the branches of the trees and shouting (v.3). Being held in the hands, they are said to be dancing with their sisters (v.4). A number of upper stones are said to be going down to the lower one which is stationary⁹⁰ (in v.5) simultaneously (v.6, 'samāyayuh; sākaṁ yuktā vṛṣaṇā bibhrato dhuraḥ). Indra is said to have become mighty on their account (v.9cd.). For a rhetorical description of their appearance and activity, cf. X.94.11, 13 (vapanto bījamiva dhānyākṛtaṁ pṛncanti somaṁ na minanti bapsataḥ |).

X.98 : The hymn is interesting not only as representing a kṣatriya as a purohita indicating a late development in the growth of the sacrifice,⁹¹ but also as giving a few points regarding the sacrifice. Thus the selection of a 'purohita' for a sacrifice is indicated in vv.4 and 7 (purihitaḥ hotrāya vṛtaḥ). The shower of rain is said to be obtained through the propitiation of gods in v.8 (viśvebhirdevairanumadyamānaḥ pra parjanyaṁirayā vṛṣṭimantam), where Agni along with the Viśvedevas is said to be directing the rain. Prof. Macdonell⁹² believes the hymn to be magical in character inasmuch as it can bring rain (according to him) without the help of the gods. It should however be noted that this is nowhere indicated in the hymn itself. When Devāpi has undertaken the performance of a sacrifice for bringing the rainfall, he is said to request Indra for the same (v.4, ā no drapsā madhumanto viśantu indra). In v.5, it is said

87. The denominative 'subrahmanya' is used half a dozen times in the RV. II.20.4, 21.8 (nūtanasya brahmanyataḥ), II.17.1, 8, (brahmanyantaḥ naraḥ indra te sumnaṁ aśyuh), II.34.11, VIII.6.33 and conveys the idea of 'skilful composition of hymns' apparently for sacrificial purposes.

88. For Tvaṣṭr's connection with the soma sacrifice, cf. Chapter III. p. 57; Chapter IV, pp. 89-90.

89. Vide Chapter XII.

90. Vide Chapter IV, pp. 82-85; cf. X.175.3 'grāvāna upareṣvā mahīyante sajoṣasaḥ, 'for a similar suggestion.

91. Vide Chapter VII. p. 165.

92. ERE VIII, pp. 311-21 and Chapter X, p. 211.

that the rainfall follows from heaven through the worship of the gods. It is the prayer reaching the god that is said to have brought the rain (v.7c, *devaśrutam vṛṣṭivanīm rarāṇaḥ*) and v.8 (quoted above) specifically refers to the role of the gods. There is therefore no ground for construing the hymn as Prof. Macdonell does.

X.107: The hymn really glorifies the liberal patrons of the sacrifice and as such belongs to fairly late stage of the sacrifice.

X.114: The hymn describes some mystical associations with the sacrifice. vv. 1-2 — Three gharmanas and three 'nirṛtis' are referred to.

v.3 describes the altar metaphorically.⁹³

v.5 mentions twelve 'grahas' of soma and some metres associated with the sacrifice (v.6). It is thus that the chariot of the sacrifice is said to be set in motion (v.6cd.). It may be noted that thirty-six cups are later on used in the Agniṣṭoma rite and forty in the Atyagniṣṭoma and so this verse is construed as giving the details of those rites without their names.⁹⁴ Geldner⁹⁵ suggests that the number may refer to hymns. Even if the cups are referred to here, the reference need not be to the two later rites as the latter may have been designed on the basis of this reference, construed arbitrarily.

v.7 mystically refers to fourteen greatnesses (*caturdaśa anye mahimānaḥ*) and the 'Āpnāna tirtha',⁹⁶ a way by which the gods were supposed to be coming for the drink of the soma-juice. (v.7cd, *āpnānam titham ka iha pravocad yena pathā prapibante sutasya*).

X.181: The hymn refers to a number of terms of sacrificial import. (1) offerings called *prathas* and *saprathas* (v.1); (2) hymns called 'bṛhat' and 'rathantara' (v.2)⁹⁷ (3) *yajus* which goes to the gods (*devayānam*, v.3) and the hot-milk offering (*gharma*) in v.3.

X.183: This is an interesting little hymn which indicates how the emphasis was shifting from the sacrifice to the hotṛ priest. The general importance of the role of the hotṛ has been stressed in v.3 (*aham garbhamadhām oṣadhīṣu* etc.).

X.191: The hymn is a significant prayer for perfect accord in the sacrificial gathering. Thus v.1 (*iḥaspade samidhyase sa no vasūnyābhara*) indicates the gathering to be a sacrificial one. All the gods are apparently being worshipped in the rite as indicated in v.3 (*samānam mantramabhi mantraye vaḥ samānena vo haviṣa juhomi*), where equal offerings etc., are said to be given to all the

93. for vv. 3-6, cf. Chapter X, p. 215.

94. HRG II p. 558.

95. Geldner III p. 338 f.n.

96. Geld. (Ibid.) construes it also as a path leading to the *uttara vedi* (Vide chart in ABI Vol. II).

97. VII.32.22, 23 are 'rathantara sāmā'. VI.46.1.2 are 'bṛhat sāmā'.

gods. Perfect accord of the people is prayed for in vv.2 and 4, with gods as the standard of comparison for them (v.2cd, devā bhāgam yathā pūrve samjānāna upāsate |).

ATHARVANIC HYMNS :

There are a few hymns particularly in the tenth maṇḍala, which appear to be used as spells for some specific purposes. VII.55.2-4 and 5-8 appear to be two independent spells. The repetition of 'ni śu svapa' in the first unit and the root 'sas' in the second indicates its character as a magical spell. But the idea of divine assistance is also at the back of the mind of the poet as indicated by his emphasis on his being the devotee of Indra (v.3, stotṛṇ indrasya rāyasi). The same idea has also been emphasized in more or less the same fashion in a majority of the other hymns of that category.⁹⁸ As it has been observed in the tenth chapter magic is a separate tendency which was in prevalence all the time and as the presence of the few hymns indicates, the poets and the priests were to an extent conversant with it. Though the idea of the sacrifice and religion has grown quite on independent lines, the promoters of it could not neglect the presence of a rival ideology altogether. The reference to divinities in the spells, may indicate an attempt to elevate the plane of magical practices from the depth of their association with the spirits. Thus Indra is referred to in X.102, 166, Agni in X.87, 162, various gods in X.37 and 165, Brahmanaspati in X.155, Indrāgni in X.161, Indra and Brahmanaspati in X.164, and Aśvins in X.184. Black magic (yātu)⁹⁹ however has been denounced in very strong terms and persons indulging in it¹⁰⁰ are expected to be punished severely (X.87.3). Such persons were said to be obstructing the sacrificial performances and hence Indra is said to have punished them (VII.104.21).

The presence of these hymns, thus merely indicates the existence of a different ideology with which the poets were conversant but which in no way appears to have influenced their thought about the sacrifice.

Thus these different varieties of sacrificial hymns would give an indication of the variety of ways in which the idea and the practice of the sacrifice were being handled by different thinker-poets and also give a broad idea about the stages by which the sacrifice was growing.

98. X.58, 59(1-4), 87, 102, 137, 145, 146, 155, 161-66, 184.

99. Note the protestation of Vasiṣṭha against it VII.104.15-16 and Chapter VII.

100. Yātudhāna: V.I. II p. 190; VMH III. 426 ff.

Chapter Twelve

SACRIFICIAL SIMILES

प्र यज्ञ एतु हेत्वो न सन्तिः । (RV VII. 34.2)

यज्ञो मनुः प्रमतिर्नः पिता । (RV X. 100.5)

SYNOPSIS :

Method of expression of ideas, having a bearing on the cultural level of the people—similes as effective modes of expression—scope of similes for the purposes of the present topic—sacrifice and its accessories as standard of comparison or otherwise—Information available of a supplementary character—indicating the influence of sacrifice on the life of the people—

Discussed under seven different heads—sacrifice with a variety of metaphors—Hymns compared with different aspects of the sacrifice—similes with the patrons or the priests as the standard of comparison—divinities and their activities compared with sacrifice and its accessories—divinities compared with divinities with sacrifice as the connecting link between them—soma similes—dealing with Indra-soma relationship—those connected with the different aspects of the process of pressing—similes where some aspects of sacrifice are compared with other acts or vice versa—where some aspects of sacrifice are compared with some other aspects of sacrifice—

The method of expression of ideas has always got a significant bearing on the cultural level attained by a people and in its turn, it is influenced by the prevailing ideas of the time. Similes are known to be an effective mode of expression from very ancient days and hence it is necessary to review the similes which have a bearing on the system of sacrifice prevalent at the time of the R̥gvedic hymns. It may be noted that the term 'simile' is used in a wide sense here and the term 'sacrificial' too will not merely indicate those cases where sacrifice or its aspects are employed as standard of comparison but also include those where ideas connected with sacrifice are sought to be illustrated by other ideas. This has been done in order to ensure a fuller idea of sacrifice as it was sought to be expounded by the R̥gvedic poets.

The information thus available can only be of a supplementary character but it will throw some light on certain aspects of the R̥gvedic sacrifice that came to be emphasized in the eyes of those people, who by their compositions have helped the evolution of the system of sacrifice. In a general way, the expression of the ideas in terms of the sacrifice would also indicate the wide influence of the system of the sacrifice on the life of the people.

For the sake of the facility of understanding, as well as comparison, the similes have been arranged in seven different categories.

- (A) Sacrifice described with a variety of metaphors.
- (B) Hymns compared with various aspects of the sacrifice or with other objects, having a bearing on sacrifice.
- (C) Similes with (a) patrons, and (b) priests as standard of comparison.
- (D) Divinities and their activities compared with the sacrifice or its accessories.
- (E) Divinities compared with divinities with the sacrifice as the connecting link.
- (F) Soma-similes.
Similes concerning the various aspects of the pressing and the general influence of the soma-juice.
- (G) Similes (a) where some aspects or acts of sacrifice are compared with other acts;
(b) where other acts are compared with sacrificial acts;
(c) where some aspects of sacrifice are compared with some other aspects of sacrifice.

(A) (YAJÑA-TANTU :)

(1) II.3.6 : 'tantum tatam samvayanti samici yajñasya peṣaḥ sudughe'.

In the Āpri hymn of the Gṛtsamadas, the twin deities Uṣas and Night are said to be weaving the thread of the sacrifice. As the Āpri hymns describe a family ritual,¹ the two divinities are praised because the main Agni ritual was undertaken in the morning and evening. For the frequency of the mention of the ritual twice a day, cf. Chapter VI, p. 126.

(2) VIII.13.14 :matsvā sutasya gomataḥ | tantum tanuṣva pūrvyam yathā vide ||

Here Indra is asked to enjoy the soma-juice and perform the sacrifice, as it was known from ancient days. The metaphor of thread conveys the idea of the soma-ritual extending over a long period of time, during which certain aspects of the sacrifice had come to be fixed, which are desired to be known. For the idea of soma, leading to new conventions, cf. IX.86.32.

(3) IX.22.6ab : 'tantum tanvānamuttamamanu pravata āśata'.

Here soma is said to be flowing towards the thread that is being stretched. It may be tempting to construe 'tantu' here as the sheep's wool across which the soma-juice is described as passing very fre-

1. Vide AHR. B.U.J. 1946.

quently; but it appears that it is the metaphor of performing the sacrifice that the poet has in view here particularly as the 'tantu' is said to be being stretched (tanvāna). In the following verse (v.7c) 'tataṁ tantumacikradah', where 'soma' is said to be crying out towards the 'stretched thread', 'tantu' may refer to sheep's wool, though there too, it can be construed as 'the sacrificial performance'.

(4) IX.86.32: 'sa sūryasya raśmibhiḥ parivyata, tantum tanvānastrivṛtaṁ yathā vide | nayannṛtasya praśiṣo navīyasīḥ ||'.

Here soma is said to be stretching the threefold thread, apparently of the sacrifice, as indicated by the last line, where he is said to be leading to new conventions regarding the sacrifice.² Referring to the idea of ancient mode of performance as in (2) above, it is said to be threefold, indicating either the three 'śāvanas' or the threefold way of mixing the soma-juice.³

(5) X.172.3: 'pitubhrto na tantumit sudānavaḥ prati dadhmo yajāmasi'.

It is made clear here that 'laying down the thread' means 'perform the sacrifice'.

(6) As if in continuation of this metaphor, a person performing a number of sacrifices, closely following one upon the other and as such 'surrounded' by them, is compared with a woman clothed in garments.

'....yo vām yajñebhirāvṛtaḥ adhivastrā vadhūriva'. (VIII. 26.13ab).

(YAJÑA-RATHA) :

(1) II.18.14: 'prātā ratho navo yoji sasniscaturyugastrikaśaḥ saptaraśmīḥ | daśāritro manuṣyaḥ svarṣāḥ sa iṣṭibhirmatibhī ranhyo bhūt ||'

The chariot is the sacrifice as Sāyaṇa points out. According to Prof. Velankar, full metaphor is probably not intended as Sāy. explains and the figures indicate greatness of Indra's chariot. One obvious point leading to the metaphor is referred to in 'd', where the chariot is said to be speedy on account of hymns and oblations. The metaphor conveys the idea of the sacrifice being furthered by the hymns. For the idea of the hymns being compared with horses, cf. X.18.14, etc. (below); and oblations—cf. soma compared with horses IX.36.1, 62.6, 64.29, 86.3, etc.

(2) III.2.8: 'rathīṛtasya brhato vicarṣaniragnirdevānāmabha-
vat purohitah'.

2. Vide Chapter VI p. 125.

3. Vide Chapter V pp. 103-104.

4. Vel. B.U.J. IX 1940 p. 89 fn.

The metaphor is suggested by the fact of Agni being referred to as the charioteer of the (chariot in the form of the) Rta or the sacrifice. The śleṣa on 'purohita', with Agni's prominent place in the sacrifice and that of the charioteer in the chariot in view is quite obvious. The metaphor conveys the idea of Agni furthering the sacrificial performance.

(3) IV.2.14: 'ratham na kranto apaso bhurijorṣtam yemuh sudhya āsuṣāṇāh'.

The priests are being considered as carpenters, who are fashioning the chariot of the sacrifice. The idea of skill (indicated by 'apasah'), intelligence (indicated by 'sudhyah') and hard work (indicated by 'āsuṣāṇāh') is suggested as they are required in both.

(4) IX.62.17: 'tam triprṣṭhe trivandhure rathe yuñjanti yātave | ṛṣṇām sapta dhītibhiḥ'.

The metaphor is based on the soma being conceived as a horse yoked to the chariot (of sacrifice). The idea conveyed is of the progress of the sacrifice on account of soma. For 'triprṣṭha ratha' cf. Chapter V. p. 103. The three seats possibly were the three fires.

(5) IX.89.4: madhuprṣṭham ghoramayāsamaśvam rathe yuñjantyurucakra ṛśvam | svasāra im jāmayo marjayanti sanābhayo vājinamūrjayanti ||' The horse (i.e. soma) is said to be yoked to the chariot (of sacrifice). The chariot is said to be multi-wheeled (urucakra), indicating the different aspects of the sacrifice like the pressing, mixing, offering, etc., as suggested by the epithets of the soma and its description of being decorated by the fingers in the manner of a horse. The metaphor thus suggests the multifarious activities connected with the performance of the soma-sacrifice.

(6) X.93.9: 'indro....eṣām carṣaṇinām cakram raśmim na yoyuve'.

Indra is said to be guiding the chariot of sacrifice indicated by reference to the 'wheel' and the 'reins'. For the idea of gods guiding the sacrifice, cf. Chapter III. p. 42.

(7) X.101.7: 'prṇitāśvān hitam jayātha svastivāham rathamit-kṛṇudhvaṁ'.

The metaphor indicates the winning of the blessings or fortune, when the horses (soma-juices) are well-maintained.

(8) X.114.6: 'yajñam vimāya kavayo manīṣa ṛksāmābhyām pra ratham vartayanti'.

The measurement of the sacrifice implies a similar measurement by the carpenter before fashioning a chariot and 'ṛk' and 'sāman' setting the chariot going are apparently conceived as horses.

(YAJÑA-AŚVA) :

(1) VII.43.2 : 'pra yajña etu hetvo na saptiḥ'.

The sacrifice is compared with a speedy horse (a race horse), winning prizes as indicated at X.101.7 above.

(YAJÑA-NAU) :

The metaphor of the sacrifice as a boat (X.101.2, 'ā tanudhvaṁ nāvaṁ; X.105.9, 'sajūrnāvaṁ svayaśasaṁ'), with hymns as the oars (VIII.42.3, 'yayā-dhiyā-ati viśvā duritā tarema sutarmāṇamadhi nāvaṁ ruhema; X.63.10, 'daivīm nāvaṁ svaritrām; X.101.2, nāva-aritraparaṇīm), which can help a person to cross all the adversities (VIII.42.3; VIII.18.17, 'yuṣmākaṁ nāvā ati viśvāni duritā pipartana) and lead him to well-being (X.63.10, asravantimā ruhema svastaye), is referred to in a few places. To convey the idea of the importance of the sacrificial performances for the social order and well-being, it is also said that those who do not resort to it, come to grief (X.44.6, na ye śekuryajñiṣāṁ nāvamāruhamīrmaiva te nyaviśanta kepayah).

(YAJÑA-KṚṢI) :

(1) X.101.3-6 imply this metaphor. Certain aspects of sacrifice are referred to as ploughing (v.3, yunakta sīrā), others as sowing (vapateha bījam), still others as reaping (v.3, sṛṇyah pakvameyāt). In vv. 4-6, the soma-vessels (v.5, nirāhāvān kṛṇotana) and the sprinkling of juice (vv. 5-6), may indicate the sprinkling of rain for the crops and complete the metaphor.

(YAJÑA-MANU) :

X.100.5 : 'yajño manuḥ pramatirnaḥ pitā'.

The metaphor indicates the importance of the sacrifice even for the origination of the human race. The suggestion of cosmic importance associated with the sacrifice indicates the importance of the sacrifice for the general understanding of the problem of human life in all its aspects.

(B) HYMNS COMPARED—

(WITH OFFERINGS) :

(1) I.61.1 : 'asmai...prayo na harmi stomaṁ māhināya'. The hymn is compared with sacrificial food (prayas) in respect of delightfulness.

(2) I.61.2 : 'asmā idu praya iva pra yaṁsi bharāmyāṅgūṣaṁ bādhe suvrkti'. Both the hymn (āṅgūṣaṁ) and food are offered.

(3) VII.36.2 : 'imām vām mitrāvaruṇā suvrktimiṣaṁ na kṛṇve asurā naviyah'. Just like the food to be offered, the composition is also said to be fresh.

(4) II.16.1 : 'pra vaḥ satām jyeṣṭhatamāya suṣṭutimagnāviva samidhāne havirbhare'. The idea is of offering both as in (2) above. The comparison of Indra with Agni is implied.⁵

(5) VII.13.1 : prāgnaye....manma dhītiṁ bharadhvam | bhare havirna barhiṣi priṇāno vaiśvānarāya ||. The idea is of offering both to propitiate the divinity (indicated by priṇānah).

(6) I.110.6 : 'ā manīṣāmantarikṣasya nṛbhyaḥ sruceva ghṛtaṁ juhavāma vidmanā'. The idea is of knowing the way in which ghṛta is offered (indicated by 'vidmanā'), implying the skill or the ease with which the hymns are supposed to be composed.

(7) III.2.1 : 'vaiśvānarāya dhiṣaṇāmṛtāvṛdhe ghṛtaṁ na pūta-magnaye janāmasi'. By referring to the purity of ghee required for the sacrifice, the purity of the hymn required for the sacrifice is suggested.

(8) V.12.1 : 'ghṛtaṁ na yajña āsye supūtaṁ giram bhare vṛṣa-bhāya praticim |'. The idea is of offering and purity as in (2), (7), (9), (10), (14).

(9) VI.10.2 : 'ghṛtaṁ na śuci matayaḥ pavante'. Hymns are said to be pure like ghee.

(10) VIII.12.4 : 'imaṁ stomamabhiṣṭye ghṛtaṁ na pūtāmadri-vaḥ |' cf. (7), (8) above. The divinity is said to be granting protection by the hymn as by the ghṛta.

(11) VIII.39.3 : 'agne manmāni tubhyaṁ kaṁ ghṛtaṁ na juvha āsani'.

The main idea is of offering. cf. also X.91.15.

(12) I.169.4 : 'stutaśca yāste cakananta vāyoḥ stanam na madhvaḥ pipayanta vājaiḥ'.

The comparison is in respect of swelling with sweet drink and producing rewards (vāja).⁶

(13) V.41.3 : 'uta vā divo asurāya manma prāndhāmsīva yajyave bharadhvam'.

The hymn is compared with soma-juice as both are to be brought for offering.

(14) VI.8.1 : 'vaiśvānarāya matirnavyasī śuciḥ soma iva pavate cāruragnaye'.

Freshness, purity and attractiveness are emphasized as characterizing the hymns as well as the soma-juice.

(15) VII.64.5, 65.5 : 'eṣa stomo varuṇa mitra tubhyaṁ somaḥ śukro no vāyave'yāmi'.

5. Vel. B.U.J. IX 1940 p. 85 f.n.

6. cf. Vel. B.U.J. XX 1951 p. 27 f.n.

For the idea of freshness and purity associated with soma-juice to Vāyu, cf. Chapters III and V. It may be noted that the sacrificial association of Vāyu with the soma-juice has given rise to the simile.

(16) IV.41.8 : 'śriye na gāva upa somamasthurindram giro varuṇam me maṇiṣāḥ'.

Like milk going towards the soma juice, the hymns are said to be attending upon Indra and Varuṇa for the sake of glory. The sacrificial association of soma with milk gives rise to the simile.

(17) I.116.1 : 'nāsatyābhyām barhiriva pravṛṇje stomāṇ iyarmi'.

The comparison is in respect of offering and the skill required in fashioning the two for the sacrifice.

(18) VIII.103.6 : 'madhorna pātrā prathamānyasmai pra stomā yantyagnaye'. The comparison is in respect of 'going first'. The soma juice is of course kept ready earlier.

(WITH AGNI)

IV.41.1 : indrā ko vām varuṇā sumnamāpa stomo haviṣmān amṛto na hotā | yo vām hr̥di kratumān asmaduktaḥ pasparśadindrā-varuṇā namasvān ||)

Though the main point is of winning the favour of Indra and Varuṇa, the comparison of the hymn with Agni, who is referred to as 'amṛto hotā' as contrasted with the mortal hotṛ priest, is more significant inasmuch as both the hymn and Agni are associated with oblations (haviṣmān) and both appeal to the heart of the gods (hr̥di pasparśat), Agni by going to the gods and thus coming into close contact of the gods and the hymns metaphorically doing so.

(WITH HORSE) :

I.61.5 : asmā idu saptimiva śravasyā indrayārkaṁ juvḥā samañje'.

The comparison is in respect of decoration, but the idea of 'desire for glory' (śravasyā) as the purpose in the employment of both is also quite clear.

X.18.14 : 'praticim jagrabhā vācamaśvam raśanayā yathā'. The simile occurs in a verse not commented upon by Sāyaṇa.⁷ The idea sought to be expressed is apparently of firm grasp and progressive movement.

X.46.5 : 'nayanto garbham vanām dhiyam dhurhiriśmaśrum nārvāṇam dhanarcam' | The hymn is compared with a golden coloured horse in respect of brightness and also the ability to win wealth (dhanarcam).

(WITH THE YOKE OF THE CHARIOT)

X.93.12 : 'etaṁ me stomam.....| saṁvananam nāśvyaṁ taṣṭevānapacyutam'.

The idea implied is of the skill in fashioning the yoke on the part of the carpenter. 'anapacyutam' seems to indicate the firmness of the hymn. The point is clarified by the comparison of the composer with the carpenter (taṣṭeva). The hymn considered as the yoke also suggests the comparison of the sacrifice with the chariot and also the fact of the hymn forming the foremost aspect of the sacrifice.

(WITH CHARIOT):

V.60.1 : 'rathairiva prabhare vājayadbhiḥ pradakṣiṇinmarutām stomamṛdhyām' |

The hymn is compared with the chariot as both are instrumental in winning wealth and are possessed of speed in reaching the destination. cf. the following simile and also IX.69.1 and X.42.1 below.

VIII.3.15 : udu tye madhumattamā giraḥ stomāsa irate | satrājito dhanasā akṣitotayo vājayanto rathā iva ||

The speed (udirate), ability to win wealth (dhanasā) and protection are the points of comparison.

X.39.14 : etaṁ vām stomamaśvināvakarmātakṣāma bhṛgavo na ratham |

The poetess 'Ghoṣā' compares herself and her family with Bhṛgu, apparently in respect of the fashioning of an efficacious hymn and also with carpenters (indicated by 'ātakṣāma'), fashioning a chariot. cf. IV.16.20. 'brahmākarma bhṛgavo na ratham'.

(WITH CHARIOTEER) :

VIII.95.1 : 'ā tvā giro rathirivāsthuh suteṣu girvaṇaḥ'.

With the pressed out soma-juice ready, the hymns are said to be going to Indra, even as the charioteer (goes to the chariot).⁸

(WITH ARROW) :

(1) IX.69.1 : iṣurna dhanvan pratidhiyate matiḥ |

In comparing the hymn with the arrow on the bow, the idea indicated is apparently of being ready and reaching the destination with speed.

(2) X.42.1 : 'asteva su prataram lāyamasyan bhūṣanniva prabhara stomamasmai'.

By the comparison of the priest with the 'archer', the comparison of the hymn with the arrow is suggested and the latter half suggests the comparison of the hymns with decoration. The pleasing aspect and the speed are the points of comparison.⁹

(WITH SHOWER OF RAIN) :

VII.94.1 : 'iyam vāasya manmana indrāgnī pūrvyastutiḥ | abhrādvṛṣtirivājani'.

The glory that both of them bring is apparently in view of the poet.

(WITH RIVER) :

VI.36.3 : 'samudraṁ na sindhava ukthaśuṣmā uruvyacasam gira ā viśanti'.

The greatness of Indra is indicated as unfathomable by any number of hymns offered to him.¹⁰

X.25.4 : 'samu pra yanti dhītayaḥ sargasō'vatān iva'.

The speed in going to the destination is the common point indicated.

(WITH BOAT) :

X.116.9 : 'prendrāgnibhyām suvacasyāmiyarmi sindhāviva prerayam nāvamarkaiḥ'.

The ease and the speed in reaching the destination are indicated and the comparison of the sacrifice with the ocean suggested.

(WITH BRANCHES) :

VII.43.1 : 'yeṣām brahmānyasamāni viprā viṣvagviyanti vanino na śākhāḥ' cf. Chapter II, p. 43.

Difference in hymns in honour of different divinities is indicated.

(AS IF MOVING ON FEET) :

VIII.12.31 : 'imām ta indra suṣṭutiṁ vipra iyarti dhītibhiḥ | jāmiṁ padeva pipratim prādhvare ||'

Brisk movement of the hymn in the sacrificial performance (i.e. its recital) is indicated as it is said to be directed by the singer. The feet intended by the poet would be either the words or preferably the quarters (lines) of the verses.¹¹

(WITH THE SONG OF THE PRESSING STONE) :

IV.3.3 : The idea is of common worship of god (īḥ).

9. Vel. B.U.J. XXI 1952 p. 13.

10. Vel. B.U.J. XI 1942.

11. Vel. B.U.J. XIV 1945 p. 19 f.n.

(C) (a) PATRONS :

VII.18.25: 'imaṁ naro marutaḥ saścatānu divodāsaṁ na pitaraṁ sudāsaḥ'.

The comparison is in respect of receiving the divine favour by performances of sacrifices.

VIII.3.12: 'śagdhi yathā ruśamaṁ śyāvakaṁ kṛpamindraḥ prāvaḥ svarṇaram|'. The comparison is in respect of help received from Indra through the sacrificial performances. For Ruśamas cf. Chapter VIII. p.

IX.82.5: 'yathā pūrvebhyaḥ... paryayāḥ... evā pavasva suvitāya navyase'.

The comparison implies the idea of the new soma performances being as good as the old ones in winning the divine favour.

X.13.1: 'vi śloka etu pathyeva sūreḥ'. The hymn is said to be proceeding as if on the path of the patrons. The path is apparently of the sacrifices, supported by the patrons previously.

(b) PRIESTS :

There are a number of similes with individual priests or families as the standard of comparison on account of the composition of hymns for the sacrifices or on account of certain specific sacrificial performances.

(1) Aṅgirasas :

III.31.19; VIII.40.12, 43.13: Some poets of Viśvamitra, Kaṇva and Aṅgiras families compare themselves with Aṅgirasas in respect of invocations and sacrificial service.

(2) Atri :

At V.4.9, 7.8, 22.1, 51.8-10, 72.1, later poets of the family are comparing themselves with their ancestor in respect of Agni worship as well as specific soma offerings. At VIII.5.25, a Kaṇva poet is mentioning Atri as a standard along with Kaṇva Priyamedha etc. At VIII.35.19 and 36.7, Śyāvāśva is referring to Atri in respect of hymns (pūrvyastuti, 35.19) and sacrifices (sunvataḥ and karmāṇi kurvataḥ, 36.1).

(3) Aṇavāna: VIII.102.4.

(4) Uśanas: IX.97.7, soma is compared with Uśanas in respect of the sweet music of its flow.

(5) Kaṇva: VIII.6.11, 52.8. The comparison is in respect of the same points as in the case of Atri.

(6) Jamadagni: IX.97.51: 'ārṣeya' i.e. the priestly skill of Jamadagni is the basis of the comparison.

(7) Bhṛgu :

IV.16.20; VIII.43.13, 102,4; X.39.14, 101.13; Bhṛgu are indicated to be wellknown for their invocations and poetic and artistic compositions (cf. Chapter VII and Chapter VIII 'arādhās').

(8) Manu :

III.32.5; VI.68.1; VII.11.3; VIII.10.2, 43.13, 27; Manu is referred to as an ancient sacrificer fit to be imitated in his divine worship (yajadhyai, 68.1).

(9) Vyaśva :

VIII.23.23, 24.22, 26.9; IX.65.7.

In the first three similes a descendant of Vyaśva is quoting him as in ideal but in the last, a Bhṛgu or Jamadagni poet (according to Anuk.) is considering him as an ideal soma-sacrificer.

(10) Sthūrayūpa :

At VIII.23.24, a descendant of Vyaśva is considering him as an ideal priest.

Sometimes certain priests of old are referred to in general as ideals in the sacrificial performances. Thus, at IV.2.16, a Vāmadeva poet is referring to his ancestors in respect of their work for sacrifices (āśuṣāṇāḥ).

At VI.19.4 and 42.6, the comparison is in respect of the divine help received by the ancient sages.

There are certain similes with certain functions of the priests as the common points expressed or suggested.

IX.95.5, cf. under 'upavaktr' in Chapter VII, p. 167.

(hoṭṛ) : At IX.97.26, the comparison is in respect of both being delightful and sacrificing to the gods. At IX.97.47 (hoteva yāti samaneṣu rebhan), the flowing soma-juice is compared with the hoṭṛ singing and moving about.

IX.101.15 : 'haviḥ pavitre avyata vedhā na yonimāsadam'. The idea conveyed is of movement and taking the appointed place in the case of both the soma-juice and the priest.

I.83.6 : 'grāvā yatra vadati kārurukthyaḥ'. The comparison is in respect of sweet musical sound.

(Udgāṭṛ) : II.43.1, 2 (cf. Chapter VII, p. 164).

VII.103.1 : 'samvatsaram śaśayānā brāhmaṇā vratacāriṇaḥ... vācam... maṇḍūkā avādiṣuḥ'. The comparison is in respect of the vow for a year as also of becoming vocal at a certain appointed time.

VII.103.7.¹² The idea is of sitting round the soma vessel (saro na pūrṇam abhitāḥ) and reciting the mantras (vadantaḥ) on an appointed day (samvatsarasya tadahaḥ).

12. Vide 'atirātra' in Chapter VI p. 127 and Chapter XI p. 241.

VII.103.8 : 'adhvaryavo gharmaṇaḥ siṣvidānāḥ'. The comparison of the frogs with the sweating Adhvaryus indicates how hard the latter must be working for the soma-pressing (vide Chapter VII 'adhvaryu', p. 163).

VII.103.9 : 'devahitim jugupurdvādaśasya ṛtuṁ naro na praminyete'. The idea conveyed is of the fixing up of a day for a particular performance and then carry it out without failure.

The idea of the priests sitting round in a soma-ritual is referred to at VII.103.7 (see above), VIII.33.1 (pari...āstate), VII.32.2 (ime hi te brahmakṛtaḥ sute sacā madhau na makṣa āstate), I.55.8 (āvṛtāso avatāso na kartṛbhiḥ).

The similes at X.78.1 (viprāso na manmabhiḥ svādhyah | devāvyo na yajñaiḥ svapnaṣaḥ ||) indicate the importance of the priests in the sacrificial performances. Maruts are compared here with the inspired singer-priests as both of them are wise thinkers (svādhyah)¹³ on account of their well thought out hymns. By such performances, the people came to be considered as good workers (svapnaṣaḥ).¹⁴

(D) :

As we have observed elsewhere, the sacrifice has progressed with the idea of divinity. The idea of divinity was also influenced by the social circumstances of the time. When we find that divinities are sought to be described in terms of sacrifice or its accessories, we can realise the influence the sacrifice had got on the social and religious thought of the time.

A broad illustration may be taken in this connection. It is known that Agni is compared with the hotṛ and purohita or is merely referred to as the hotṛ and purohita, indicating how the functions of the hotṛ and purohita had come to be identified with those of Agni. This identification carried further made Agni the brahmin among the gods, when the hotṛ necessarily meant a brahmin. Similarly Indra was referred to as 'sūri' or 'maghavan' (the liberal patron) because his function also was to give liberal gifts even like that of the patrons. This can be seen in a simile (I.168.7 below), where the gift of the god is compared with the 'dakṣiṇā' in the sacrifice. Other functions like being brave, fighting with and defeating the enemies were also common and hence the gods came to be compared with or identified with the patrons. It is this process carried further that made Indra a 'kṣatriya', because in later days the patrons were the kṣatriyas.

13. As opposed to them are mentioned the 'durādhyah' at IX.79.3 (dhanvanna trṣṇā samarita tān abhi. soma jahi pavamāna durādhyah), where they are expected to be abandoned by Soma.

14. For the idea of activity as sacrifice cf. 'Karmajān viddhi tān Sarvān' Gītā IV.32b.

With this broad idea in mind, it can be understood that a number of other things connected with the sacrifice have also had their share in the description of the divinities.

There are a number of similes with Agni as the priest, also indicating some other points concerning the sacrifice.

V.43.3 : 'hoteva naḥ prathamah pāhyasya'. As the soma was offered in Agni, he was naturally the first drinker. It also appears that when the priests would drink the juice, the hotṛ was to drink first.

VI.3.6 : 'sa īm rebho na prati vasti usrāḥ'. Both the priest and the fire appear in the morning. cf. VII.63.3 below.

VI.4.1 : 'yathā hotarmanuṣo devatātā yajñebhiḥ sūno sahaso yajāsi'.

Agni and the priest both worship the gods.

VI.11.4 : 'āyurṁ na yaṁ namasā rātahavyā añjanti suprayasaṁ pañcajanāḥ'.

The pañcajanas are said to be worshipping Agni like Āyu, carrying good oblations (prayas).¹⁵ This Āyu is different from Āyu mentioned at I.53.10, II.14.7, VI.18.3, who is said to be defeated by Indra along with Kutsa. So Āyu appears to refer to some priest who had come to be worshipped for his sacrificial service, indicated by 'suprayas'.

This person has not come to be worshipped as a divinity like the Ṛbhus.

VII.7.3 : 'prīṇite agnirīlito no hotā'.

Agni is said to be pleased when worshipped like the hotṛ. The idea of pleasing the priest is indicated.

VII.30.3 : 'nyagniḥ sīdadasuro na hotā'.

The idea is of the hotṛ priest established for the purposes of the sacrifice (see Chapter VII, pp. 161-163).

VII.63.3 'vibhrājamāna uṣasāmupasthād rebhairudeti anumadyamānaḥ'.

With the morning rites in view the association of Sūrya with singers is referred to.

VIII.44.29 : 'dhiro hyasyadmasad vipro na jāgrviḥ sadā'.

Residence in the house and watchfulness are the points of comparison concerning the sacrifice.

X.21.1 : 'agnim na svavṛktibhirhotāraṁ tvā vṛṇīmahe'.

The idea of choosing the hotṛ priest for the sacrifice is referred to.

15. Vide Chapter V p. 113.

X.78.4 : 'abhi svartāraḥ arkaṁ na suṣṭubhaḥ and X.78.5, viśva-rūpā āngiraso na sāmabhiḥ'.

Maruts are compared with the priests in general or Āngirasas in respect of the singing (of hymns).

X.115.3 : 'āsā vahnīm na śociṣā virapśinam'. With crackling sound from the flames, Agni is compared with priests reciting chants through their lips.

I.55.8 : 'āvṛtāso avatāso na kartṛbhistanūṣu te kratava indra bhūrayaḥ'.

The powers residing in Indra are compared with priests surrounding the soma lake. For the idea, cf. VIII.103.7 in (C) above.¹⁶

VI.71.5 : Savitr is compared with upavakṛ in respect of direction¹⁷.

The gift of the gods is compared with the gift of the patrons ultimately leading to the comparison of the gods with the patrons at I.168.7, 'bhadrā vo rātiḥ prṇato no dakṣiṇā.'

The gift of Maruts is compared with the sacrificial gift of the patrons (prṇat) at I.169.4, 'tvam tū na indra taṁ rayim dā ojiṣṭhayaḥ dakṣiṇayeva rātim'

VII.59.7, 'naro na raṇvāḥ savane madantaḥ' and IV.1.8, 'sadā raṇvaḥ pitumativa saṁsad' indicate the idea of patrons or their assembly taking delight in the sacrifices.

At I.168.3 and X.78.2, Maruts are compared with soma juices in respect of some assistance rendered in the sacrifice ('duvas' in 168.3 and 'śarma' in 78.2).

At IV.1.19, Agni appearing bright is compared with the milk and soma-juice at the place of sacrifice.

VIII.96.21, 'kṛṇvannapāmsi naryā purūṇi somo na pito havyaḥ sakhibhyaḥ'. Indra is compared with soma as both perform a number of manly deeds and are fit to be invoked. For the former idea cf. IX.88.4, 'indro na yo mahā karmāṇi cakriḥ' and for the latter cf. I.179.5 and VIII.48.4.¹⁸

X.149.5 : 'avase vandamānaḥ somasyevāmsuṁ pratijāgarāham'.

The idea is of waiting upon the god as upon the soma plant or juice. Perhaps the 'tiroanhya' soma is in view of the poet which would be required to be guarded after pressing during the night.

At I.175.1, the glory of Indra is compared with the soma vessel.¹⁹

16. For 'avata' as a soma lake, cf. IV.50.3 'tubhyaṁ khātā avatā adridugdhāḥ' for a different interpretation cf. Vel. B.U.J. XVII 1948 p. 20.

17. cf. Chapter VII, p. 167 for 'upavakṛ'.

18. Vel. B.U.J. XVI 1947.

19. Vel. B.U.J. XX 1951.

At VI.66.10, Maruts are compared with the brilliance of the sacrifice. At I.73.3, 'anavadyā patijūṣṭeva nārī', the pure sacrificial fire is compared with a chaste woman liked by her husband. The idea of kindling fire in an approved fashion is also indicated.

VII.34.5, 'abhi prasthāta aheva yajñam'. With 'days going to the sacrifice' as the upamāna, the close association of days with sacrifices right from the beginning is indicated.

(WITH THE PRESSING STONES) :

II.39.1, 'grāvāneva tadidartham jarethe'.²⁰

Aśvins are compared with the pressing stones in respect of sing-ing the selfsame thing,²¹ indicating possibly the soma juice which is pressed out by the stones and liked by Aśvins.

V.25.8, 'tava dyumanto arcayaḥ grāveva ucyate bṛhat'. The crackling sound produced by the flames of fire is being compared with the sound of the pressing stones.

VIII.26.24,²² tvām...nṛṣadaneṣu hūmahe | grāvānam nāśva-prsthām manhanā || Vāyu is compared with the pressing stones and the soma plant, with a horse on it. The idea appears to be that both of them drink the soma-juice first. For the idea of Vāyu drink-ing the soma-juice first, cf. I.134.6, II.11.14²³ and the pressing stones, doing so cf. X.94.2 (Chapter IV. p. 84).

(WITH VARIOUS OTHER MATERIALS OF SACRIFICE) :

V.19.4, 'gharmo na vājajatharah' Agni with oblation in it is compared with gharma²⁴ having the milk in it.

I.92.5, 'svaruṁ na peśo vidatheṣvañjañ citraṁ....'

Uṣas is compared with the white 'svaru'²⁵ cf. III.8.9 (Chap. IV, p. 78). IV.6.3, 'udu svarurnavajā na'. Agni is compared similarly. IV.51.2, 'asthuru citrā uṣasaḥ purastānmitā iva svaravo adhvareṣu'.

The idea of brightness, firmness and standing at regular distance from each other are the common points.

VII.10.2, 'aroci, yajñam tanvānā uśijo na manma'. Agni is compared with the hymn of the poet possibly in respect of performing the sacrifice (yajñam tanvānā). Both Agni and hymn are essential for the performance.

20. Geldner I. p. 326 f.n.

21. cf. VIII.2.16; X.106.1.

22. Chapter IV p. 84.

23. Vide Chapter V, p. 105 above.

24. Vide Chapter IV, p. 82.

25. Vide Chapter IV p. 78. Srinagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

(WITH GHṚTA) :

At IV.1.6 and IV.10.6, Agni is compared with ghṛta in respect of purity. cf. VIII.12.13.²⁶

Gods going to the worshippers are compared with flies towards 'madhu', at IV.45.4. cf. VII.32.2 for priests compared similarly.

At VIII.35.9, they are compared with 'śyena'. For the idea of eagerness and speed cf. X.61.3 ('mano na....dravantā') where they are compared with mind.

(MISCELLANEOUS SIMILES) :

At X.78.3, Maruts with their gifts are compared with the blessings of the pitrs.

At I.58.2 and 60.7 Agni with oblations in it is compared with horse decorated on its back.

At I.59.1, Vaiśvānara is compared with 'sthunā' indicating the fact of Agni being the main-stay on account of the sacrifices.

At I.59.3, like lustres in the sun, the wealth is said to be firmly residing (dhruvāso) in Agni, indicating the sacrifice to be the source of material prosperity. At X.4.1, 'dhanvanniva prapā asi tvamagna iyakṣave pūrave', Agni is said to be like 'oasis' in the desert, indicating the importance of Agni for the sacrificing people.

At I.16.5, V.36.1, VII.98.1, VIII.4.3, 10, 33.2,²⁷ 45.24, the eagerness of Indra for the soma juice is described by his comparison with a bull going to the drinking place. The same is indicated by his comparison with a gambler at VIII.45.38²⁸

For the same reason, Aśvins are compared with buffalos at VIII.35.7, 9 and Maruts with bulls at VIII.87.1.

Indra impelled by the soma-pressers is compared with a horse at VIII.49.5, 50.5.

The two jaws of Indra are compared with two sruvas at X.96.9. For the idea of sruva carrying the soma-juice, cf. Chapter IV. pp.80-81.

The ease and the skill with which Indra destroyed the enemies of Sudās is compared with the cutting of the 'barhis' grass at I.63.7, VII.18.11.

(E) :

V.33.5 : Indra is compared with Bhaga as both are fit to be invoked (havya). For the idea with Bhaga, cf. VII.41.5.²⁹

26. Vel. B.U.J. XIV 1945 takes 'ghṛtaṁ na āsan' as equivalent to Agni. But Indra can be understood as compared with ghṛta here.

27. Vel. B.U.J. XV 1946 p. 3 f.n.

28. op.cit p. 8.

29. for a different interpretation cf. Vel. B.U.J. VIII 1939 pp. 17-18.

VIII.1.26. Indra is compared with Vāyu in respect of drinking first (cf. under VIII.26.24, above, p. 262).

VIII.12.33³⁰ Indra is compared with Agni in respect of gifts given.

VIII.25.19. Sūrya is compared with Agni looking bright with oblations offered therein.

VIII.74.2, 'yaṁ janāso haviṣmanto mitraṁ na sarpirāsutim'. Agni is compared with Mitra in respect of the offering of 'sarpis'. For the idea of ghr̥ta being the popular offering with Mitra and Varuṇa, cf. Chapter III. p. 58.

VIII.94.6, Indra is compared with Agni in respect of drinking soma in the morning. For 'hotṛ' meaning Agni, cf. VIII.12.33 above.

IX.104.1. In respect of glorification by sacrifices, soma is compared with Agni (yajñai paribhūṣata śriye).

IX.105.1, 'śiśum na yajñaiḥ svadayanta gūrtibhiḥ'. Soma is compared with Agni as both are instrumental in the sacrifices and utterances and both have the same function of 'sweetening' (svadayaṇta).

X.7.6, Agni is asked to accept oblations for himself as for other gods. X.46.7, 'vāyavo na somāḥ'.

Winds physically and soma juices metaphorically increase the strength of Agni.

X.40.3, Aśvins going to savanas are compared with two princes.

(F) SOMA SIMILES :

Soma as the most popular and effective offering of the sacrifice has evoked a very large number of similes connected with the various stages of its pressing. Howsoever interesting a detailed study of those similes may be it is not undertaken here beyond a reference to the variety and some occasional comments as the same is not quite pertinent from the point of view of our present problem.

(1) Washing of the plant with water: Soma is compared with a horse or a man being bathed (fingers of the hand being compared with a woman or women) at IX.6.5, 56.3, 57.3, 65.26.

(2) Soma juice flowing across the strainer to the vessels is the point of description of the majority of these similes.

It is compared with a horse in nearly forty places (IX.6.5, 10.2, 36.1, 43.5, 64.3 etc.); with a wild beast (IX.32.4); with a lion (IX.89.3, 97.28) with a buffalo (IX.33.1, 69.3 etc.); with a bull (IX.71.9, 85.9, etc.); with a hawk (IX.38.4, 61.21, 67.15, 71.6, 96.23 etc.); with a chariot IX.3.5, 10.1, 69.9, etc; with a king IX.7.5, 10.3, 82.1, 86.40,

30. Vel. B.U.J. XIV 1945 p. 19.

etc.; with the sound produced on the strainer in view, it is compared with shouting of warriors striking in battles at IX.69.2; cf. also IX.13.6, 43.5, 45.4. With sound and lustre in view it is compared with various divinities. Thus with Maruts at IX.70.6, 88.7, etc.; with Sūrya at IX. 54.2, 63.13, 84.2 etc; with Savitr at IX.97.48; with Aryaman at I.91.3; it is also compared with a singer at IX.71.7; with a child at IX.74.1; with the 'vajra of Indra' at IX.77.1.

The flow of its stream is compared with the shower from heaven at IX.17.2, 97.30; with rivers flowing speedily along slopes at IX. 17.1, 80.5, 107. 12 etc.

(3) Purified soma-juice reaching the vessels is compared with a bull going to the herds at IX.76.5, 96.20; with a clean washed garment at IX.69.4; with a horse reaching the winning post IX.74.8, 93.1; with rivers reaching the sea at IX.88.6; 107.9; with a king going to the assembly at IX.92.6.

(4) Soma flowing towards and resting in Indra is described with Indra as the ocean, as he drinks ample soma-juice. cf. I.30.3, 110.1; VIII.49.3; IX.108.16.

(5) Soma mixed with milk is described as putting on a cloak as the colour would change to that of milk. cf. VIII.1.17; IX.57.3, 107.26, etc.; with a horse decorated at IX.32.3, 43.1.

Soma mixed with curds and ghee is compared with sun in lustre at IX.101.12.

(6) It is compared with the devotion of the worshippers at IX.97.46. People with soma are compared with men with fodder at VIII.45.16. Indra-soma relationship is described in a characteristic simile at IX.86.16 'sakhā na sakhyuḥ pramināti saṅgiram'.

On account of the connection of soma with sacrifice and through it to the laws governing the universe, the place of soma is compared with the laws of Varuṇa at I.91.3 (rājño nu te Varuṇasya vratāni bṛhad gabhiram tava soma dhāma). For the same reason, soma is said to be the pillar, supporting heaven and earth at IX.74.2 (divo yaḥ skambho dharuṇaḥ); also 86.35, 46; 87.2, 89.6.

With such important position occupied by soma in the sacrifice, he even comes to be identified with the sacrifice (IX.10.3, yajño na sapta dhātṛbhiḥ). The comparison is in respect of association with the seven priests.

As winning wealth in thousands (sahasrāpsāḥ) and victorious in battles (pṛtanāṣāt), it is compared with sacrifice at IX.88.7.

It is identified with a mighty sacrifice at IX.56.1 (soma ṛtam bṛhat).

The idea of soma pursuing the evil-doer and destroying him gives rise to similes where he is compared with a club at IX.97.16 and a creditor at IX.110.1.

For a simile of ethical importance, referring to the influence of soma in glorifying terms cf. IX.97.18 (explained in Chapter XIII.). The universal prevalence of the soma sacrifice is indicated at IX.41.6 (pari ṇaḥ śarmayantyā dhārayā soma viśvataḥ | sarā raseva viślapam) where the soma-juice is said to be flowing all-round like the river Rasā.

(G) :

(a) I.169.3, 'āpo na dvīpaṁ dadhati prayāṁsi'. (cf. 'prayas' Chapter V.). The sacrificial offering arranged round the fire gives rise to the simile. V.43.7, piturna putra upasi preṣṭha ā gharma agnimasādi'. Gharma vessel on fire is compared with a son on the lap of his father. The idea is of the pot heated for a long time (cf. 'gharma' in Chapter IV. p. 82). At VII.43.3, gods sitting on the vedi are compared with sons with their mother. VII.22.1, 'yam te suśāva haryaśvādriḥ soturbāhubhyāṁ suyato nārvā'. Like the upper pressing-stone (Chapter IV. p. 83), horse is also controlled with both the hands. For a similar idea cf. also X.76.2. VII.39.1, 'bhejāte adri rathyeva panthām'. The pressing stones are compared with persons going in a chariot, the goal of the former being the sacrifice.

At I.140.1bc, the altar is said to be the food and the hymn, to be the garment of the gods. At VI.64.6, sacrificers with food are compared with birds as both become active in the morning (vyuṣṭau).

At VII.93.3, the invoking persons are compared with horses approaching the winning post in respect of winning the prizes (arvanto na kāṣṭhām nakṣamānāḥ).

At VIII.19.27, the oblation towards the gods is compared with the son towards the father as both grow in the household (subhṛto durone).

At IX.12.12, the priests invoking Indra are compared with cows lowing to the calf.

At X.25.1, people delighting in soma sacrifices are compared with cows enjoying in the pastures, both receiving the nourishment.

At X.43.7, gods are said to be growing on account of sacrifices as 'yava' by the shower of rain.

At X.62.9, the gift of Sāvarṇya is compared with Sindhu in expansion (paprathe) and regarding its being inapproachable by others, it is compared with heaven (diva iva sānu).

At X.101.7, the storing place of the soma juice is compared with a well and the well-guarded churning place is compared with a fortress at X.101.8.

(b) At I.63.7 and VII.18.11, Indra is said to be destroying the enemies of Sudās with skill and ease with which the barhis is cut.

At I.116.24, the ease with which Rebha has been picked up by Aśvins is indicated by the comparison of the act with the picking up of the soma juice by a 'sruva'.

At VII.104.2, 'indrāsomā' are requested to see that sin surrounds the sinful persons as fire surrounds a 'caru'. The idea of the 'caru', being surrounded on all sides by fire is in the mind of the poet. 'agha' (sin) and fire both have the tormenting effect (tapas).

At X.39.2, the gift given by Aśvins to the patrons is compared with the charming soma juice in respect of the attractive character of both. At X.109.5, the idea of soma carried in the ladle reaching the gods is stressed.

X.191.2, 'devā bhāgaṃ yathā pūrve sañjānānā upāsate'.³¹

As indicated above, the idea of offerings to different gods even received willingly becomes the standard of comparison for peaceful atmosphere in the sacrificial assembly.

(c) V.27.5 :

The sacrificail gift of Āśvamedha is compared with soma in respect of attractive character. cf. X.39.2 (vide Chapter V. p. 103, above).

At V.36.4, the singer priest (jaritā) is compared with the 'grāvan' inasmuch as both exert much (brhad āśuṣāṇa) and produce sound (vācam iyarti).

At V.86.6, offering in general is compared with the offering of the soma-juice.

At VIII.7.9, the sacrificial food (iṣaḥ) is compared with ghr̥ta in respect of swelling (pipyuṣiḥ).

Similarly 'soma' is compared with 'ghr̥ta' at IX.67.11 and 12.

At IX.92.2, soma flowing towards and resting in 'camūs' is compared with the hotṛ priest occupying his seat.

X.21.3, cf. Chapter IV. p. 80.

X.76.5, 'vibhvanā cidāśvapastarebhyah'. The pressing stones are said to be doing their work more speedily than the Ṛbhus.

31. Vide Chapter IV. pp. 72-73.

Apparently the poet has in mind the characteristic service of Vibhvan, one of the R̥bhus. In respect of quick and skilful service, R̥bhus had become the standard of comparison.

X.76.7, 'duhanti ūdharupasecanāya kaṁ naro na havyā marjayanta āsabhiḥ'. The idea appears to be similar to that in V.36.4 above. X.78.6, 'grāvāṇo na sūrayaḥ sindhumātarah'. (cf. under 'svanaya Bhāvya' Chapter VIII). The pressing stones are taken from the river Sindhu and the patrons reside on the banks of Sindhu.

X.91.15, 'ahāvi agne havirāsyē te srucīva ghṛtaṁ camvīva somah'. The offering in the mouth of Agni is compared with 'ghṛta' in the 'sruc' and soma in the 'camūs', in respect of their placing.

X.96.1 'pra te vanve vanuṣo haryataṁ madam | ghṛtaṁ na yo haribhiścāru secata'.

Soma is compared with 'ghṛta' in respect of its being sprinkled.

Chapter Thirteen

INFLUENCE OF THE SACRIFICE ON THE
SOCIAL ORGANISM AND IDEAS ABOUT
RELIGION, ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHY

यज्ञेन यज्ञमयजन्त देवास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन् । (RV X. 90.16)

न नूनं ब्रम्हणामृणं प्राशूनामस्ति सुन्वताम् । (RV VIII. 32.16)

विश्वप्सुर्यज्ञो अवर्गयम् । (RV X. 77.4)

SYNOPSIS:

Sacrifice as a social institution—not developed as an isolated phenomenon—impress on ideas in different spheres—R̥gveda and Brāhmaṇa periods distinguished for their varying approach—Variety of the hymns in the R̥gveda indicative of an experimentalist approach—analogy of the upaniṣads and later systems of philosophy—classes originating with the idea of practice of sacrifice—duties defined in terms of sacrifice—Brāhmaṇa-Kṣatriya quarrel for superiority not referred to in the R̥gveda—clashes in priestly families due to predilections in divine worship—class of priests getting defined with duties in the sacrifice—emphasis on the role of the patrons—importance of priests not overemphasized—sacrifice growing with co-operation of all sections—dakṣiṇā and social prestige—

The idea of the worship of individual divinities developing—popularity of offerings—the idea of worshipping gods in groups for the purposes of the sacrifice—composition of new hymns and the idea of divinities—indication of sacrificial epithets—intimate relationship between the divinity and the sacrifice—

Soma-similes indicating the development of ethical ideas through the sacrifice—faith in sacrifice—sacrifice not indicative of 'give and take' type of religion—idea of mutual co-operation applied to all aspects of social life—sacrifice as a duty—as a means towards an end—

Idea of sacrifice growing in close conformity with the idea of the R̥ta—with the predominance of Indra, the emphasis shifted towards the idea of divinity—philosophical conception in terms of sacrifice—the beginning of the later conception of 'devayāna' and 'pitṛyāna' through the idea about sacrifice—concluding remark—

Sacrifice is essentially a social institution. It originates and grows in a human society and according to the lines on which it is allowed to grow, it helps to mould the growth of that society. If thus we look at the sacrifice in the R̥gveda, we find that it has not developed as an isolated phenomenon but in association with the ideas of social, religious and philosophical importance. The idea and practice of the sacrifice can be visualised as leaving their impress on the growth of the ideas in the other spheres of the life of the Aryans and moulding them into an organic whole, which can be designated as the foundation of the Aryan culture and civilization.

The period of the Rġvedic hymns has to be distinguished from that of the Brāhmaṇas for the purposes of determining the nature of the sacrifice as the two display a distinctly varying approach to the problem of life in general. Thus while the hymns of the Rġveda appear to think of different aspects of the problem of life, both realistic and idealistic, the Brāhmaṇas specifically single out the sacrifice for elaboration and glorification even at the cost of the growth of other ideas essentially required for the adequate development of the social organism.

In fact the variety of the hymns in the Rġveda of secular, religious and philosophical importance is indicative of the experimentalist approach of the Rġvedic Aryans in order to arrive at the nature of the ultimate reality though it may be described variously (I.164.46 *ekam sadviprā bahudhā vadanti*). On the analogy of the relative position between the Upaniṣads and the later philosophical systems, it can be said that the hymns of the Rġveda merely record the varied thoughts of the Aryans like the upaniṣads; while the Brāhmaṇas like the later systems, take up only one particular aspect or point viz., the sacrifice for systematisation.

On an analysis of the hymns of the Rġveda we find that sacrifice runs like a thread through these speculations about the different aspects of life, stringing them together and giving them a certain shape. It is this aspect of the sacrifice that is to be adjudged broadly during the course of the discussion in the present chapter.

In the early period of the Rġvedic hymns, the classes in the society came into existence on account of the sacrifice. The mutual relationship of the class of the patrons ('sūris') and that of the singers ('jaritr'), as also their relationship with the sacrifice have been discussed previously (chapters VII and VIII). Though the family traditions have developed in both the classes as seen above, the classes do not appear to have become rigid as indicated by the story of Devāpi and Śantanu (X.98)¹. The idea of the class, later designated as the 'brahmins' also appears to have originated with the sacrificial ritual in view as indicated at VIII.58.1 (vide chap. VII p. 141), where a 'brāhmaṇa' is said to have been selected by a sacrificer. The brahmins however do not appear to have overemphasized their importance in the system of sacrifice, though 'viprarājya' is referred to at VIII.3.4, where the word appears to indicate their superiority over the other priests and not the 'kṣatriyas'.² Their quarrels with the kṣatriyas have not been referred to in the hymns of the Rġveda, though the Bharatas appear to be responsible for the supercession of Viśvāmitra by Vasiṣṭha. The ridiculing reference to Vasiṣṭha in III.53.23, the ironical references to Viśvāmitra in VII.18.7,

1. Vide Chapter VII, p. 141.

2. Vide discussion on 'brāhmaṇa' and 'kṣatriya' in Chapter VII, p. 140-141.

9, 10. 15), the protestations of Vasiṣṭha against the charge of being a sorcerer levelled against him (VII.104.15) indicate rivalries in the priestly families culminating in such accusations. The same is further supported by the reference to different traditions in the worship of divinities indicated at V.2.6³, VI.67.9⁴, VIII.4.17⁵, 45.15⁶. This rivalry in the priestly families has helped the growth of the sacrifice as different families have tried to foster the worship of different divinities or employed different modes of worship for the purpose. The role of the Bhṛguś, Atharvans, Daśagvans, Vasiṣṭha⁷ and Viśvāmītra⁸ referred to in chapter seven in this connection particularly deserves notice. In general it is indicated at X.78.1⁹, how the class of the priests attained a sort of status on account of their intelligent work in the cause of the sacrifice.

The class of the patrons was also getting defined through its efforts for the promotion of the sacrifice either individually or jointly (vide chapter VIII, particularly VIII.25; 68; X.93). The importance of the sacrificer is emphasized by the employment of two significant epithets about him at I.12.8, where 'yajamāna' is called "haviṣpati" and at X.170.1, where he is referred to as 'yajñapati', the lord of sacrificial performances.

Just as the glory of the class of the patrons appears to be linked up with its valour and liberality in the sacrificial performances, particularly by associating with it the glorifying epithet 'maghavan' of Indra, similarly the glory of the class of the priests was supposed to lie in the composition of hymns for sacrifices as indicated at X.62.4¹⁰. Thus it will be observed that the classes, which had come into existence on account of the sacrifice were also growing on the basis of ideas associated with their role in the sacrifice.

As long as the devotional approach to the sacrifice was maintained, the emotional appeal of the idea of 'dakṣiṇā'¹¹ also prevailed; but with a little mechanisation of the idea of the sacrifice, 'dakṣiṇā' came to be associated with social prestige or freedom from blemish as indicated at X.107.3 (naraḥ prayatadakṣiṇāsaḥ avadyabhiyā bahavaḥ pṛṇanti) and promises of social welfare came to be given on the basis of the award of the 'dakṣiṇā' as at X.107.8 (na nyarthamīyuh, na vyathante, idaṁ viśvaṁ bhuvanaṁ dakṣiṇā dadāti; or v.7, 'dakṣiṇāṁ varma kṛṇute). This new technique of the sacrifice re-

3. 'Atri' Chapter VII, p. 145.

4. Ayajñasāc, Chapter IX, p. 197-98.

5. 'Pajra' Chapter VII, p. 152.

6. 'Adāśuri' Chapter IX, p. 202, cf. also under 'Agastya' in Chapter VII, p. 145.

7. Vide Chapter VII, p. 155.

8. Vide Chapter IX, p. 196.

9. Vide Chapters VII, p. 138 and XII p. 259.

10. Vide Chapter XI 'Individual hymns' p. 245 f.n. with a note on the denom. 'brahmanya' at II.21.8 etc.

11. Cf. also 'dānastuti' Chapter XI, p. 224 and 'dakṣiṇā' Chapter V, p. 119 for ideas providing incentive for sacrifice and defining the classes.

quired the dependence of others on the class of the priests and hence the balance between the two classes, which was well maintained in the days of the Rġveda, came to be disturbed in the days that followed, necessitating a fresh exposition of the idea of sacrifice in the Gītā.¹²

Among the people referred to as undertaking sacrificial performances, there appear to be a number of non-Aryans as well. When it is remembered how strongly the Aryans were pitched against the Dāsas and the Paṇis,¹³ it is significant that some of them have been converted to the Aryan cult of sacrifice successfully. This would indicate the assimilating attitude adopted by the Aryans on the one hand and the importance they were attaching to the cult of the sacrifice on the other. It would almost appear that the sacrifice had come to be equated with the Aryan way of life and had become a symbol of their culture and their civilization. Thus a Dāsa Balbūtha is referred to along with Tarukṣa, Tirindara and Parśu at XIII.6.46.48, Vasurocis¹⁴ at VIII.34.16 and Bṛbu the best of the Paṇis at VI.45.31-33.¹⁵

With the growth of the sacrifice, the class of non-sacrificers also appears to be getting distinguished, among whom there appear to be some Aryans as well (vide chap. IX under 'ayajvan', I.33.4.5). Their attitude has been analysed by a poet at X.2.5,¹⁶ indicating how the protagonists of the sacrifice were thinking intelligently to find out ways and means of promoting their cause. It is partly because of such opposition that purity in sacrifice has been emphasized at V.62.6.¹⁷ By the comparison of Agni with a chaste lady at I.73.3¹⁸ the standard of purity required in social life as also the sacrifice is indicated.

The description of a non-sacrificer as inhuman at VIII.70.11¹⁹ and the non-offering of sacrifice as a type of social calamity at X.63.12,²⁰ would show how vital a part of social life, the sacrifice had come to be considered.²¹ It is further emphasized in a characteristic simile at X.4.1 (chap. XII), where sacrifice is said to be an oasis in the desert and in a metaphor at X.100.5. At VIII.32.16 (na nūnaṁ brahmaṇāmṛṇaṁ prāśūnāmasti sunvatām | na somo apratā pape), the sacrifice is indicated to be a binding force between the divinities and the human beings and as a social duty for the latter.²²

12. RGL—B.V. Vol. X, 1949 (pp. 349-354).

13. 'yo dāsaṁ varṇamadharaṁ guhā kaḥ' 'Paṇin kikirākṛṇu' etc.

14. For the patrons, cf. Chapter VIII, p. 187.

15. Chapter IX, p. 195 and Chapter XI, p. 226.

16. Quoted and explained: Chapter IX, pp. 198-99.

17. Vide Chapter IV, p. 71.

18. Vide Chapter XII, p. 262.

19. Vide 'ayajvan' Chapter IX, p. 199.

20. Ibid. 'anāhuti' p. 199.

21. Ibid. 'ayajñasācah' pp. 197-98.

22. as they are said to be becoming 'anṛna' by offering 'soma'.

Thus it will be observed that though the sacrifice may appear to have drawn a wedge between the two classes, it was on the whole being looked upon and developed as an institution of social welfare. This could be possible on account of the devotional approach that the sacrifice had in view and it is in this way that the ideas about religion and philosophy have evolved through the idea of sacrifice.

SACRIFICE AND RELIGION:

As we have observed in the first chapter (p. 4), the sacrifice constitutes the practical aspect of religion. If it is remembered that the theory and practice always move hand in hand, it can be appreciated how the sacrifice must have influenced the moulding of the ideas about religion in its practical aspect as well.

As it has been observed in the third chapter, the idea of divinity has passed through different stages. From the idea of single individual divinities to an abstract indefinable principle in the Nāsadiya hymn (X.129), it has been quite a spectacular growth. In the early stages of the sacrifice, the worship of single divinities appears to have been fostered. The worship was characterized by the composition of hymns and an offering or offerings. It is this idea of the sacrifice that must have given rise to fresh divinities as came to be conceived by the facile imagination of the early poet-priests. It can also be understood that the worship of different divinities would come to be introduced in different regions of the Aryan settlements and hence different places would come to be specially associated with particular divinities, though the worship would later on spread over all the settlements (chapter IV). This worship of individual divinities must have gone to formulate groups of people as predominantly or even exclusively the worshippers of the one divinity or the other.²³ These groups would also be characterized occasionally by the type of offerings they would employ. The discussion about the relative position of the two main offerings 'ghṛta' and 'soma' in the fifth chapter²⁴ would indicate that even the gods would come to be distinguished by the offerings or newer forms of worship would come to be introduced with the fresh offerings.

It can also be observed how the popularity of the divinities has come to change with the popularity of the offerings. Thus it has been seen in the case of 'ghṛta' and milk, which were the earlier popular offerings with Mitra and Varuṇa²⁵ but have made way for 'soma' later giving greater impetus to Indra worship.²⁶ The popularity of

23. Vide Chapter VII 'Agastya and the worship of Indra and Maruts indicating predilections of certain families; cf. also analysis in the Chapter, p. 143.

24. pp. 96-104.

25. Chapter V; cf. f.n. 4 on p. 98.

26. Vide Indra--soma relationship in Chapters III, V and similes in Chapter XII, p. 265.

Indra worship in its turn must have helped the importance of soma to grow, culminating in the attribution of divinity to him. A similar development can be observed in the case of Ilā,²⁷ where too divinity came to be ascribed on account of sacrificial association.

In this way when the worship of a number of individual divinities had come into existence, the divinities appear to have been classified on the basis of the offering of 'soma' (soma-jāmayah' X.92.10), indicating the existence of a pattern of worship where some other offering was prominent.

This enthusiasm in worship must have led to a clash among the protagonists of the one or the other divinity as indicated in the fourth chapter and brought to the forefront the activities of the non-sacrificers as well, as indicated in the ninth chapter. As this was a potential danger to the cause of sacrifice, the idea of joint divinities appears to have been introduced. It is at this stage that the combined worship of some divinities²⁸ seems to have been introduced. But as this too must have led to the formations of different groups, the idea of 'all-divinities' (Viśvedevas) appears to have been introduced.²⁹ It is this worship of Viśvedevas that is significantly said to have propagated the Aryan cult all round. (X.65.11. āryā vratā visrjantah).

As long as fresh hymns were being composed for the sacrifices, the ideas about divinity appear to have grown and remained fresh. The cessation of fresh compositions however took away the very life-force out of the organism of the sacrifice and converted it into a mere mechanism, revolving round at the self-same spot, hampering further growth of the idea of divinity through the sacrifice.

The number of hymns in honour of a divinity, the number of sacrificial epithets and similes associated with divinities also indicate how the ideas about divinity and religion were growing through the sacrifice.

Thus it can be seen that the idea of divinity is being experimented with, with the help of sacrifice in the hymns of the R̥gveda.

SACRIFICE AND ETHICAL IDEAS:

Ideas of ethical importance for the well-being of the society were also being evolved through the sacrifice. Thus at I.164.50 (yajñena yajñamayajanta devāstāni dharmāni prathamānyāsan), the first code of moral and social behaviour is said to have been brought into existence through the sacrifices inasmuch as even the gods are said to have undertaken the sacrificial performances, which were considered as the basic principles for the guidance of the society.

27. Chap. V. pp. 109-110.

28. Vide Chapter XI, p. 233.

29. Vide Chapter III, pp. 59-62.

The idea that sacrifice could do away with all the evil in the society, has been indicated in two interesting similes. At IX.97.16 ('ghaneva viṣvagduritāni vighnan), soma is said to be striking off evils as if with a club and at IX.110.1 (dviṣastaradhyā ṛṇayā na iyase), the soma is said to be pursuing the evil-doer, as a creditor pursues the debtor.

In a still other simile, it is indicated how the sacrifice had come to be considered to be the touch-stone of the rightful activity. Thus at IX.97.18 (granthim na vi śya grathitaṁ punāna, ṛjūṁ ca gātum vṛjinam ca soma.), soma is asked to untie the knot between the rightful and wrongful activities, which are found in the world in an entangled condition.

The rightful way of earning wealth was said to be through the sacrifice, which was considered to be the practical aspect of the theoretical Ṛta, the fountainhead of all moral activity. Thus says a poet at X.31.2 (pari cinmarto draviṇam mamanyāt ṛtasya pathā namaśā vivāset | uta svena kratunā samvadeta³⁰ śreyāmsam dak-ṣam manasā jagrbhyāt |) that wealth may be thought of along the path of the 'Ṛta'. Thus it would appear that sacrifice was being looked upon as the source through which the ideas about social well-being were sought to be drawn even as it is done in the Gītā. The idea of sacrifice as a social duty is emphasized at VIII.32.16 (na nūnam brahmaṇāmṛṇam prāśūnāmasti sunvatām) where a soma-presser is said to be free from debts.

Sacrifice again was not conceived as meant merely for the sake of selfish gain. Thus a poet asks for cows and gold but for enabling him to undertake more sacrificial performances. (cf. VIII.32.9 uta no gomato hiraṇyavato'śvinaḥ kṛṇuhi iḷābhiḥ samrabhemahi).³¹ For the idea of sacrifices leading to more sacrificial performances, cf also VIII.5.6, X.7.1.

In the light of these ideas about religion and ethics, associated with the sacrifice, the myth of the Ṛgvedic religion being of the 'give and take type' stands exploded. The approach of the Ṛgvedic poets to the divinities does not appear to be so frivolous as would be made out by the description. We do not get an impression of their approaching the divinity merely as an agency to grant them their desired objects in return of some oblations. It could have been considered as a barter if it were devoid of sentiment, which has characterized their mutual relationship. The idea of divinities entertaining affectionate thoughts about their worshippers in their minds is also occasionally stressed,³² indicating that it was not a sort of business relationship that was in view of the poets of the Ṛgveda.

30. cf. Ś. 'satām hi sandehapadeṣu vastuṣu pramānamantaḥkaraṇapravṛttayaḥ |

31. cf. Raghu. 'tyāgāya sambhṛtārthānām'. (1.7).

32. RBV pp. 63-70.

The discussion in the third, seventh and eighth chapters should clarify the relationship between the priests and the patrons on the one hand and the divinities on the other. It is in a spirit of mutual cooperation that the sacrificers approach the divinity through the means of the sacrifice, even as it has been emphasized by the author of the *Gitā*, who has expounded the theory of mutual cooperation underlying the sacrifice, whose application he has tried to extend to all social activity as that alone could lead to social emancipation.

Thus it will be noted that the sacrifice is being conceived and developed as a means towards an end, the end in view being the propitiation of the divinity. The idea of the divinity also was being gradually evolved so as to lead towards the ultimate reality.

SACRIFICE AND PHILOSOPHICAL SPECULATIONS:

The discussion of various epithets based on the *Ṛta* in the chapters III-VI would indicate how the idea of the sacrifice has been growing under a very close influence of the *Ṛta*. *Ṛta* has apparently been conceived in the beginning as a greater or more pervading reality than the divinities or the sacrifice, with *Varuṇa* as its guardian deity. It is thus that the sacrifice and the divinities have been conceived as originating in and growing with the *Ṛta*. *Varuṇa* then really was the all-pervading divinity,³³ literally and otherwise. If we are to infer from the idea about *Varuṇa*, a very high standard of ethical purity was expected as the basis of human progress, as it was conceived in the light of the *Ṛta*. As we have observed in the third chapter, with the growth of the idea of divinity and sacrifice, the emphasis shifted from *Varuṇa* to *Indra*, who captured and lorded³⁴ over the whole field of Aryan thought. The emphasis also appears to have shifted from the *Ṛta*, as the idea of divinity was also being evolved with that of the sacrifice. Thus the sacrifice which at one time grew out of the *Ṛta*, became equivalent with the *Ṛta* in the course of time and it appears that still at a later date, with the growth of the idea of the reality in terms of the divinities, the *Ṛta* lost its place as the ultimate philosophical reality to which it could have been elevated. Thus sacrifice has led to the shifting of the emphasis from the *Ṛta* to a higher reality, evolved out of the idea of divinity.

The problem of the creation has been treated in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda*³⁵ in the terms of the sacrifice.³⁶ The treatment signifies that the idea of sacrifice had a very strong influence on the mind of the thinkers who were also thinking about the higher reality. It is

33. derived from 'vr'—to cover.

34. derived from 'in'—to lord.

35. X. 72, 81, 82, 90, 121, 125, 129, 130.

36. "Sacrificial setting of the philosophical hymns in the *Ṛgveda*"—BV. XII 1951 (pp. 163-71.)

thus that the divinity emerges as a sacrificer, with sacrifice as the process of creation as in X.81.82, or the beast of the sacrifice, with sacrifice as the process of creation. The idea of the one creator divinity like the Puruṣa (X.90), Hiranyagarbha (X.121), or Viśvakarman (X.81.82) has apparently grown out of the idea of Viśvedevas as the latter idea essentially involved the notion of all gods being one unit, though taken as such for the purposes of the sacrifices (cf also I.164.46 *ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti indraṁ yamaṁ mātariśvānamāhuḥ*). Though the philosophical reality has later overgrown the divine reality, the origin and growth of the idea underlying can be perceptibly noticed as evolving through the evolution of the sacrifice.

The later philosophical conception of the Devayāna and Pitṛyāna paths appears to have its origin in the hymns of the Ṛgveda, though the departed souls are specifically associated with the latter alone. It is apparently growing in its association with the sacrifice. Thus, as Agni is goer to the gods, he is called 'devayā' (III.8.5). Similarly, Maruts (I.168.1), hymns (V.76.1), pressing stones (VIII.68.4) and sacrifice (I.177.4 *ayaṁ yajño devayāḥ*) are also referred to as 'devayā'. The word 'devayāna' is also used in the sense of 'going to the gods'. The sacrificial horse is referred to as such at I.162.4 (*devayānam haviṣyam*), yajus at X.181.3 (*yajuḥ . . . prathamam devayānam*), samidhs at 51.2 (*samidho devayāniḥ*).

The paths by which the gods are coming to the sacrifices are referred to as 'devayāna'. cf. with Aśvins (*eha yātam pathibhirdevayāniḥ*, I.183.6, 184.6; III.58.5); with gods (IV.37.1). Agni is asked to bring the gods along the same. cf V.43.6. Agni is requested to make the paths smooth for the gods (X.51.5 *sugān pathaḥ kṛṇuhi devayānān*).

Thus with the sacrifice to the gods, 'devayāna' came to be conceived. With the introduction of the worship of the Pitṛs however, a slightly different path was necessary to be imagined. It is merely referred to as the 'other' path exclusively meant for them at X.18.1 (*param mṛtyo anu parehi panthām yaste sva itaro devayānāt*). It is once referred to as 'pitṛyāna' at X.2.7 (*panthāmanu pravidvān pitṛyānam*). As the offerings in the Pitṛyajña³⁷ also go through Agni, Agni is said to be knowing it. It may be noted that thus with the introduction of pitṛyajña, the idea of the path for the departed souls first came into existence. The idea about the destination is not still clearly conceived. But the two places are apparently thought of as different as the paths leading to them are different. The two paths as distinguished from each other have been mentioned vaguely at X.88.15-16 *dve srutī aśṇavaṁ pitṛṇāmahaṁ devānāmuta martyānām | tābhyāmidam viśvamejat sameti, yadantarā pitaram mātaram*

37. Vide Chapter VI, pp. 128-30.

ca ||), where all the living beings are said to be going along the two paths. The word 'sruti' is used as in the later philosophical system but the idea is in no way made clear.

Thus it will be noticed that the sacrifice in the Rgveda has been the source of originating ideas regarding the different aspects of the human thought and has not hampered in any way the growth of the philosophical speculations. This was possible because the idea underlying the sacrifice was broad enough so that the other ideas concerning other spheres of thought could also be based thereon.

Chapter Fourteen

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE CONCEPTION OF THE SACRIFICE

तत्तुं तनुष्व पूर्वं यथा विदे । (RV VIII. 13.14)

इन्द्राग्नी जरितुः सचा यज्ञो जिगाति चेतनः । (RV III. 12.2)

SYNOPSIS :

Idea of sacrifice intelligently conceived and diligently executed—illustrated by discussion about purpose—Dr. Deshmukh's view about 'bargaining stage'—variety of purpose indicated—ideas regarding sacrifice sought to be defined—sacrifice as a sort of living organism—origin not earlier than the hymns—not magical as discussed earlier—fire not associated later with the sacrifice—sacrifice originating with fire—origin referred to in X.88.8—families associated with early sacrifice and fire—structure of sacrifice on four pillars—various stages traceable along these lines only—chronological grouping of hymns not possible—but broad stages distinguishable—

First stage—hymns composed and rite performed by the same person—household as centre—earliest offerings—ghṛta, payas—soma—Mitra and Varuṇa—associated with Rta—Indra introduced—a number of important individual divinities introduced at this stage—some clashes in ideas requiring changes—transition to the second stage—characterized by co-operative effort—family traditions regarding mode of performance—quantitative aspect stressed—requiring addition of another priest—adhvaryu—no distinction in status in the beginning—existence of tradition illustrated in groups like the Āpries etc.—joint divinities, groups and Viśvedevas—idea of divinity elastic—Rbhus admitted to divinity—systematic effort to popularise worship—converts to the cult of sacrifice—sacrificial hymns—new vessels and offerings introduced—at the end of this stage, Iranians branched off from the Aryans—

Third stage characterized by all round development—introduction of different priests—pitṛyajña and the introduction of animal sacrifice—mode fashioned after the devayajña—a number of specialised rites at this stage—some speculations about sacrifice—intellectual pursuit of the idea of divinity leading to a more or less metaphorical view about the sacrifice—bifurcation in tendency—emphasis on the practical aspect of the sacrifice leading to cessation of fresh compositions—Fourth stage, transition to the brahmanical sacrifice—growth during the period of compilation—

The discussion in the previous chapters has indicated that the conception of the sacrifice can be noticed to be evolving during the period of the Rgvedic hymns and that it is not a haphazard growth but a purposeful one, intelligently conceived and diligently executed.¹ The same point is also emphasized by a poet, who deduces the lesson from the life and work of the Rbhus in the cause of sacrifice as 'na ṛte śrāntasya sakhyāya devāḥ' (IV.33.11)²

1. 'sudhyāḥ āśuśānāḥ' IV.2.14; also X.78.1 in chapters III and XII.
2. Cf. also I.179.3 'na mṛṣā śrāntam yadavanti devāḥ'.

This can be further substantiated by taking into account the purpose of the sacrifice, which can throw some light on the nature of that conception. Dr. Deshmukh³ traces four successive stages in the development of the sacrifice and believes the stage in the R̥gveda to be a 'bargaining stage'. Prof. E. O. James,⁴ considers the following ideas as connected with the sacrifice. (a) Communion; this conception is the fundamental principle underlying the most rudimentary forms of the sacrifice. (b) Conciliation. (c) Honorific offerings; free-will offerings in grateful recognition of the goodness of the deity. (d) In higher religion—the ethical notion of self-sacrifice.

The ideas that prompted the R̥gvedic Aryans to undertake sacrificial performances as can be gathered from the hymns of the R̥gveda are quite varied as it will be observed below and cannot fit in merely the one or the other categories referred to above. It is not 'communion', as has been pointed out by Oldenberg⁵ and Keith,⁶ even in the later sacrifice. The idea is not merely of bargaining as it has been remarked in the previous chapter.⁷ As the idea of the sacrifice is linked up with the ideas of divinity, social prosperity as also the ethical standard of the Aryan society, it appears to be a more complex phenomenon than can ordinarily be imagined and hence there is not much point in trying to fix it up in one or the other category.

Thus it is indicated by a poet in a sort of reminiscent mood, while pondering over the ancient tradition of the sacrificial performances at III.55.3 (*vi me purutrā patayanti kāmāḥ śamyacchā didye pūrvyāni*). The poet has apparently noticed the variety of ideas with which sacrifices have come to be offered.

(1) In a large majority of the passages, the idea of the propitiation of the divinity appears to be prominently present in the mind of the poets. Thus the god is said to be extremely propitious to those who perform the sacrifices (II.28.1 *ati yo mandro yajathāya*). The favour of the gods is very frequently requested. cf I.114.3 (*āsyāma te sumatiṁ devayajyayā*); I.108.4 (*indrāgnī saumanasāya yātam*); I.76.2 (*yajā mahe saumanasāya devān*); also III.32.13. The removal of divine anger and the consequent favourable disposition is the aim according to I.114.4 (*...sumatiṁ vṛṇīmahe*). In the refrain at I.101.1-7, '*marutvantam sakhyāya havāmahe*', it is indicated as to how as a result of the favour and goodwill, the ties of friendship are created. The same is indicated by the reference to the divinities as being the nearest to the worshippers, suggesting how the divinities are easily accessible, at II.35.12 (*asmai bahūnāmavamāya sakhye yajñairvidhema...*).

3. RVL p. 145.

4. ERE XI pp. 5-7.

5. RVO p. 331 n. 2

6. RPV p. 273.

7. Chap. XIII. p. 275. CC-0. ASI Srinagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

(2) Protection against the enemy appears to be a pretty strong aim referred to in a number of hymns. Thus Indra is said to be protecting the sacrificing Aryans (I.130.8 *yajamānamāryam prāvat*). Some of the 'dānastutis' must be having this idea underlying them, though it is not made clear; cf 'VI.6.1 *yajñena...ava icchamānaḥ*'; VI.29.1, 36.2. Protection from sin is referred to as the purpose of the sacrifice at I.136.5; II.26.4; X.63.6.

(3) Attainment of fame: the performances of sacrifices were apparently being considered as an attainment of social and religious importance. cf. I.9.8, 44.2; VIII.65.9. At VIII.23.21 (*yo asmai havya-dātibhiḥ āhutiṁ marto' vidhat...sa dhatte vīravat yaśaḥ*), fame is referred to as an attraction for undertaking the sacrificial performances.

(4) Attainment of wealth, strength, etc.: cf. III.19.1 (*rāye vājāya... yakṣat*) eac.

(5) Progress: cf VI.6.1 (*yajñena gātumicchamānaḥ*; VII.61.4 (*pra yajñamanmā vṛjanam tirāte*). II.12.9 (*yasmānna ṛte vijayante janāsaḥ*) indicates how Indra-worship attained prominence as long as unstable conditions of life prevailed.

(6) Expiation: cf. I.185.8 (*devānvā yaccakṛmā kaccidāgaḥ | iyaṁ dhīrbhūyā avayānameṣām*); I.114.4 (*rudraṁ yajñasādhaṁ...ni vha-yāmahe | āre asmad daivyaṁ heḷo asyatu...*); VII.51.1 (*anāgāstva adititva turāsaḥ | imaṁ yajñam dadhatu śroṣamānāḥ ||*). This would indicate that the sacrifice had come to be identified with sinlessness (*anāgāstva*) and freedom (*adititva*). When a non-sacrificer has come to be described as 'satyadhvṛt',⁸ the identification of the sacrifice with truth also becomes clear, thus indicating that the sacrifice had come to be considered as symbolic of all that was good and noble in life.

These noble ideals underlying the sacrifice have been emphasized by contrasting them with others at V.42.10 (*tucchyān kāmān karate siṣvidānaḥ*) where others sweating for some petty ideas have been referred to.

This variety in the occasional expression of the purpose of the sacrifice indicates how the idea, underlying the sacrificial performance is being sought to be defined by the poets in the process of its growth.

This broad idea about the fundamental role of the sacrifice is further supported by the reference to the sacrifice as a sort of living organism that is growing and enlightening the people. It is indicated by reference to the sacrifice as 'cetana' (I.170.4, III.12.2, VIII.13.18, 92.21). It may be noted that the word appears to be used in the general sense of enlightenment, furtherance etc. Thus Agni

8. Vide chapter IX, p. 199.

is associated with the furtherance of the sacrifice. (III.3.8 'adhva-rāṇām cetanaṁ jātavedasam; II.5.1 'hotā janīṣṭā cetanaḥ). Soma is also so referred to at IX.64.10.

At III.12.2 'jaritūḥ sacā yajño jigāti cetanaḥ', the 'cetana' sacrifice is said to be associated with the singer-priest. At I.170.4 (tatrā-mṛtasya cetanaṁ yajñam te tanavāvahai), the role of the sacrifice in awakening the gods is referred to. At VIII.13.18 and 92.21 (cetanaṁ devāso yajñamatnata), the gods are said to be performing the 'cetana' sacrifice, indicating the vital importance of the sacrifice. Sacrifice would thus appear to stand as a symbol, a wheel for generating the power that was essential for the sustenance of the human society.

It is with these ideas about the purpose and the role of the sacrifice in view that we have to trace its origin and growth.

The origin of the idea of the sacrifice in the R̥gveda,⁹ cannot be imagined to lie earlier than the composition of the hymns even for the sake of an argument as pointed out above.¹⁰ It has also been amply shown in the tenth chapter that the R̥gvedic sacrifice has not grown out of the idea of magic, as religion and magic are two quite distinct tendencies.¹¹ The idea of Macdonell that fire came to be associated with the idea of sacrifice at a later stage (ERE XII p. 611 b.) is quite unsupported by facts. As it has been observed in the third (pp. 45-48) and the fifth (pp. 121-22) chapters above, the association of Agni with the R̥gvedic sacrifice, right from its early beginning is so obviously stressed that it is impossible to believe that it could have been otherwise. The evidence from the R̥gveda is quite telling enough in this regard.

At X.65.7,¹² the credit of the origination of the sacrifice is given to the gods. Though this has been done mainly to glorify the gods, the emphasis on the system of the sacrifice as a vital aspect of the creation along with the heaven and the earth is quite significant.¹³ Two other points of importance have been referred to in 'ab'.¹⁴ The gods are said to be 'agni-jivhāḥ' and 'ṛtāvṛdhāḥ'.¹⁵ The reference to their pondering over 'ṛta' before creating the sacrifice (vimṛśanta āsate) further signifies how the idea of sacrifice is based on the conception of the R̥ta. This explains how the altar (chap. IV p. 73) and the place of the sacrifice (chapter IV p.69) come to have a number of

9. For Dr. Keith's view regarding the origin and purpose cf. RPV pp. 257-78, where he treats the sacrifice as a whole as he does not distinguish between the R̥gvedic and the brahmanic sacrifice.

10. Chapter I. p. 15.

11. Vide chap. X for Dr. Deshmukh's view; Cf. also RPV p. 48; p. 260 where Keith controverts the view of Bergaigne and Geldner and points out that the priests do not claim to control the gods.

12. Vide Chap. IV. p. 44.

13. For a similar idea, cf. Gītā 'sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛstvā' (III.10).

14. Ibid.

15. The two phrases repeated together at I.44.14; VII.66.10; X.65.7; for 'agnijivhāḥ' cf. I.89.7; III.54.10, VII.11.14, X.52.14.

epithets based on the *Rta*. The reference to the gods as 'agnijivhāh' further suggests how the fire was associated with the sacrifice right from its very early stages. cf also VIII.102.10 (agnim yajñeṣu pūrvyam) where fire is said to be the earliest in the sacrifices. The same thing is also indicated by the offering of the ghr̥ta,¹⁶ which, apparently was the earliest of the offerings as also by its specific association with Mitra and Varuṇa.¹⁷

X.88.8¹⁸ is more specific in describing the origin of the sacrifice (sa eṣāṁ yajño abhavat). The beginning is said to be marked by the hymns (sūktavāka). Next came the introduction of fire (ādid agniṁ ajanayanta) and with the fire came the oblations (haviḥ) to be offered therein.¹⁹ These three together are said to have combined together to constitute the sacrifice. Though we may not see any chronological order herein, the statement about the origin of the sacrifice referred to here is quite significant. It indicates how the sacrifice has been associated with the fire, the hymns and the offerings right from its beginning. It was thus from the earliest stage of the kindling of fire that the sacrifice seems to have originated. This is also supported by the fact that for the purposes of the sacrifice, the fire continued to be kindled with the 'araṇis' and hence the hymns occasionally describe the process quite graphically as in III.29.

The same point is further supported by the reference to Agni being first kindled by the priestly families of Atharvan and Aṅgirasas,²⁰ who are also credited with the origination of the sacrifice. cf with Atharvan, (I.83.5, X.92.10 'yajñairatharvā prathamam vidhārayat) and with Aṅgiras, X.67.2 (yajñasya dhāma prathamam mananta). It is also indicated by statements where fire is said to be taken to the gods after it is kindled. (cf III.9.5 ainam nayan mātariśvā...devebhyo mathitam pari; cf also I.141.3, III.5.10).

Thus it would be clear that as far as the *Rgvedic* sacrifice is concerned, it has originated with the idea of propitiating the divinities through Agni with the help of the hymns and the offerings so that the progress of the individual as well as the group should become possible. With a metaphor it can be said that the patrons and the priests jointly embarked upon a common task of mutual benefit in erecting the structure of the sacrifice on four pillars viz., (1) divinities (2) fire (3) hymns and (4) offerings.

This fact emerges not only from the passages referred to above but practically permeates the whole discussion about the sacrifice that we have had in the previous chapters. The importance of all

16. Chap. V. pp. 96-99.

17. Vide chap. III. pp. 57-58 and chap. IV p. 82.

18. Chap. II. p. 20

19. Vide remarks on p. 95 (chap. V.).

20. Vide chap. VII. p. 144, 146.

these different originating and supporting elements has been appropriately stressed by the poets in various places. It should therefore be obvious that the idea of the sacrifice would also grow along these lines only. It is thus that the four stages of the growth of the sacrifice are being described below.

It will be remembered that, as we have remarked in the beginning of the present work, it is almost impossible to arrive at exact chronological groupings of the Rgvedic hymns, which can distinguish these stages from each other. Ideas are like seeds, sprouting in different regions at different times. So it may happen that ideas characterizing two different stages may also be come across in some hymns. But on the whole, it will be found that the stages of the growth can be clearly seen in the light of the earlier analysis of the relevant matter in that regard.

I

The first stage was characterized by the worship of the individual divinities with the help of the fire kindled in the household and the hymns composed to propitiate the divinity concerned. The work of composing the hymn and officiating at the rite was apparently done by the same person, who came to be referred to as 'jaritṛ', 'kāru', 'vipra' in his former capacity and 'hotṛ' in the latter one. Agni was chosen as the medium of the performance for obvious reasons. A number of the epithets of the place of the sacrifice,²¹ referring to the household indicates that practically all the householders had started performing the worship at their own places. The fire was kindled by the rubbing of the 'araṇis' and this earliest custom has prevailed in later days as well, as it came to have certain associations with it right from the beginning of the sacrifice in those ancient days.

The earliest offerings were of ghr̥ta and payas²² and 'soma' too came to be introduced soon afterwards. It appears that the earliest pressings of the soma juice were not quite attractive²³ and as a result there was a sort of clash between the two sections favouring these different offerings. The association of Mitra and Varuṇa predominantly with the offering of the ghr̥ta also indicates the earlier character of those divinities. As it has been indicated in chapter III,²⁴ the idea of the R̥ta has also been prominently associated with Varuṇa as the oldest divinity. This earlier character of Varuṇa was of course comparatively so. Indra then came to be introduced and the offering of the 'soma' attained prominence with the arrival of Indra.²⁵ Though soma too had come to be offered to Varuṇa, it

21. Vide chapter IV. p. 69.

22. Vide chap. V. p. 113.

23. Vide chap. V. p. 98 f.n.

24. Pp. 57-58.

25. Vide chap. V. p. 100

became the most popular offering with the growth of the Indra worship and a number of other divinities also came to be prominently associated with soma. Thus soma became the most important of the offerings even during the first stage, though ghr̥ta continued to be characteristically associated with Mitra and Varuṇa even later.

It may be noted that most of the important individual divinities of the Ṛgvedic pantheon had come into existence even during the first stage of the sacrifice because the earlier idea must have been to introduce new divinities in the system of the sacrifice by the composition of the hymns and the offering of the oblations in the course of the rites in their honour.

As it has been observed in the seventh chapter,²⁶ some families appear to have specialised in the worship of some deities. It is likely therefore that some poets, who subsequently became the founders of various families had sponsored the worship of certain individual divinities at this stage. This is also indicated by the clash of ideas regarding the superiority of one divinity or the other, which is occasionally referred to in the hymns. This rivalry, though giving an impetus to the performances of the sacrifices in general, must have been noticed as a potential danger to the cause of the sacrifice as such. It is for this reason that certain changes were sought to be introduced in the theory and the practice of the sacrifice. This marks the transition to the second stage of the sacrifice.

II

If the first stage is characterized mainly by individual effort, the second stage is characterized by cooperative effort which has led towards the formation of a real system of sacrifice.

In the course of time, family traditions had come into existence not only regarding the composition of the hymns but also the mode of performance, though it does not appear to be in any way elaborate. It however appears that the quantitative aspect of the sacrifice has flourished during this period, necessitating the addition of a hand to help the hotṛ priest. Thus 'adhvaryu' came to be introduced, whose duty mainly was to render assistance in the duties connected with the pressing of the soma juice.²⁷ As it has been observed above, there was no idea of superiority of the one or the other among the priests at this stage in the sacrificial performances and hence at II.16.5 the two priests are referred to as 'Adhvarayū'. In the Āpri hymns too, there is a mention of only these two categories of priests, the hotṛ and the adhvaryu.

At III.17.1, 5, it is indicated how the idea of initiating some previous conventions or ritual had come into existence. Thus in v.1

26. Pp. 142-43.

27. Vide chap. VII. p. 163.

(‘samidhyamānah prathamānudharmā) and in v.5 tasyānudharmā prayajā), the kindling of fire and some fire-ritual according to old customs are referred to. The same thing is further indicated by the close traditions illustrated in the Āpri, Parucchepa and Vālakhilya groups.²⁸ Thus some family or group affinities, which came into existence during this period, helped the cause of the sacrifice.

Regarding the growth of the idea of divinity, we find that during this stage, the idea of joint divinities, of the group of some individual divinities and of the Viśvedevas came to be introduced gradually. As it has been observed above (chapter VII), all sorts of combinations or groups of divinities have been formed for the sake of the needs of the devotees as required by the situation. It may be further noted that the idea of divinity appears to be fairly elastic at this stage. It is thus that for some characteristic service, even certain human beings were ascribed divinity and given a share in the sacrifice. A tendency towards such attribution of divinity can be observed at VI.11.4,²⁹ where a human being is said to be adorable like a god. The Bhṛguṣ³⁰ are said to be practically considered as gods at X.92.10 (devā dakṣair bhṛgavaḥ saṁcikitrire |). The next stage is marked by placing the Ṛbhus among the divinities themselves which seems to have caused some heart burning among a section led by Tvaṣṭr, who appears to have attained divinity like the Ṛbhus a little earlier.³¹

It is during this period that systematic effort was made to popularise the cult of the sacrifice by various means of broadening the nature of the sacrificial worship. The enthusiasm with which the cult of the sacrifice was followed can be seen illustrated in the expression of a poet at II.30.7 (na mā tamat, na śramat, nota tandrat, na vocāma mā sunoteti somam), where wishes that none should express any anti-sacrifice desire merely because there is great labour and exhaustion involved in the performance thereof.³² Another indication of the broad aspect of the idea and the practice of the sacrifice can be obtained from a reference at III.19.4 (bhūrīṇi hi tve dadhire anikā agne devasya yajyavo janāsaḥ),³³ where Agni is said to be looked upon as various gods for the purposes of the sacrifice. Thus the idea of ultimate unity of worship through Agni was gradually coming into existence.

It is this broad aspect of worship that also appears to have created confidence even in the minds of some Dāsas and Paṇis, who appear to have become converts to the cult of the sacrifice.³⁴

28. Vide chap. XI. p. 233-34 and AHR for the Āpri hymns.

29. Vide chap. XII. p. 260.

30. Vide chap. VII. p. 154.

31. Vide chap. III. p. 57 and B.U.J. XXI 1952.

32. Cf. also X.57.1 ‘mā pra gāma patho vayanā mā yajñāndra somināḥ’ ||

33. Cf. ‘purvanika’ as epithet of Agni at I.79.5, VI.5.2, 11.6 etc.

34. Chap. VIII. p. 184, IX. p. 195.
CC-0. ASI Srinagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

The idea of specific hymns for the purposes of the sacrifice,³⁵ appears to have come into existence at this stage. Though fresh compositions were encouraged, some compositions on the pattern of some previous ones associated with some sacrificial efficacy, appear to be welcomed as is illustrated in the *Āpri*, *Parucchepa* and *Vālahilya* groups particularly. The idea of some mystical association with the hymns,³⁶ with the sacrificial efficacy in view, appears to belong to this stage only.

New vessels with new names and some changes in the offerings too appear to have come to be introduced at this stage. Some of the peculiar offerings referred to in chapter V to smaller or bigger deities must have come to be introduced at this stage, with a view to add some attractive details to the performance, which must have been quite elastic in its nature.

As fresh family traditions had come into existence by the time, some of the earliest individuals and families appear to have become names of almost hoary past at the end of this stage and as a result have come to be referred to almost as mythical beings.³⁷

It is at the end of this stage of the sacrifice that the Iranians appear to have branched off from the Aryans. The affinity between the Avesta and the R̥gvedic Sanskrit is quite noteworthy in this connection³⁸ but more remarkable is the affinity in ideas which renders the conclusion about a common stock of the Aryans and the Iranians inevitable. Thus it will be noted that there is a very close affinity in respect of the following aspects connected with the sacrifice: (1) general trend of worship centred round the fire (2) the pressing of the soma juice (3) the two priests *hotṛ* and *Adhvaryu*³⁹ (4) family ritual as illustrated in the *Āpri*s carried on with changes in the form as can be inferred from the 'Afringans' in the Avesta.

III

The third stage is characterized by all round development in the mode of performance. Different categories of priests have come into existence during this period; but it should be noted they only indicate the difference in the mode of performance and not the elaboration of the ritual. There is no evidence to indicate that all the different priests were employed in the same ritual at a time. It is significant that even in the elaborate ritual of the *Aśvamedha* sacrifice (I.162.5 *hotādhvaryurāvayā agnimindho grāvagrābha uta śamstā suviprah*), only six priests have been referred to. Besides, as it has been observed in the discussion about the 'udgātṛ',⁴⁰ though

35. Chap. II. p. 27.

36. Vide Chap. X. pp. 211-12.

37. Vide Atharvan, *Āngirasas* in chap. VII. pp. 144, 146.

38. Vide RRG. p. 21; also ERP.

39. Vide chap. VII. p. 163.

40. Chap. VII p. 164.

sāman hymns were commonly known as having some sacrificial efficacy,⁴¹ the introduction of the urgātṛ as a priest with a specific function in the sacrifice seems to belong to a later date. The singers of sāman are so rarely referred to in comparison with the hotṛ and the adhvaryu that the idea of singing sāman appears to have come into existence at a later stage. It may also be noted that like 'hotra' etc., there is no word used to indicate either the duties or the vessel associated with the udgātṛ.⁴² The existence of the words like hotra, potra etc., refer to both the duties of the priests as well as the vessels of soma.⁴³ Thus though the idea of designating vessels of different priests had come into existence, the words do not come to be employed exclusively in that sense, indicating a pretty elastic nature of the ritual prevalent at the time.

The family traditions which had developed to an advanced stage by the time appear to be responsible for the introduction of one person as the head of the group. It is thus that we find that both the 'brahman' as well as 'purohita' came to be introduced mainly with the idea of honouring a person than by the requirements of the details connected with the ritual.

As far as the offerings were concerned there appears a growing tendency to classify and designate them on some basis though the material was practically the same as before.⁴⁴ A significant innovation in the offerings seems to be the introduction of animal-offerings at this stage. The point has been discussed in detail⁴⁵ and it appears that the animal sacrifice came to be introduced after the 'pitṛyajña' had come into existence. Regarding pitṛyajña,⁴⁶ it should be noted that it has not been introduced as a result of the combination of the worship of the gods and demons as Macdonell imagines.⁴⁷ It is a mode of worship which is essentially conceived after the pattern of the divinity worship and it has come to be introduced at this stage of the Ṛgvedic sacrifice. It is thus too that some specific rites referred to in the sixth chapter came to be introduced at this late stage.

The changing emphasis on the different aspects in the mode of the performance which was being variously experimented with at this stage, is indicated at different places. I.105 makes some interesting observations in this regard. The poet is praising the Viśvedevas, whose introduction has a peculiar sacrificial significance as we have seen and which the poet appears to have in his mind. The

41. Chap. II. p. 32.

42. Cf. 'Adhvaryava' at X. 52.2.

43. Vide chap. IV. p. 92, f.n.

44. Vide chap. V 'ājya' p. 108 and the names prathas and saprathas.

45. Chap. V pp. 177-18 also VI pp. 135-38.

46. op.cit. I.

47. ERE p. 610b. It may be noted that the funeral rites do not form a part of the 'pitṛyajña'.

poet has also noticed the importance of 'soma' in the sacrifice and so remarks (v.3 mā somyasya śambhuvaḥ śūne bhūma kadācana) that he should never be in want of 'soma'. But as it is indicated elsewhere) IX.86.32 nayannṛtasya praśiṣo navīyasiḥ), in that regard also new traditions were coming into existence and hence the poet wants to know the latest vogue in the sacrifice (v.4, yajñam prcchāmi avamam). Agni has continued to enjoy the same status in the sacrifice and so he says that Agni can tell about it (sa tad dūto vivo-cati). The poet however is wondering as to how the older mode of worship has disappeared (kva ṛtaṁ pūrvaṁ gatam) and wants to know the latest emphasis in that regard (kastad bibharti nūtanam). In the following verse therefore he is asking all the gods about it (kad vā ṛtaṁ kadanṛtaṁ kva pratnā va āhutiḥ). This constant craving for change appears to puzzle even a person in the field as indicated by the reference to the poet as one who knew the soma rite (V.7 ahaṁ so asmi yaḥ purā sute vadāni kāni cit), but was worried because he could not keep pace with the change. (taṁ mām vyantyā-dhyah).

Some specific limitations appear to be placed on the performance⁴⁸ at a later stage, indicated by the condemnation of the 'atiyājas' at VI.52.1 (ni hīyatām atiyājasya yaṣtā). Though the excesses are condemned, deficiencies are not said to be coming in the way of the performances as it came to be considered at a later stage. The emphasis is more on the idea of devotion in the sacrifice as indicated at X.86.19.⁴⁹

It is clearer still at VIII.102.19.21, where any kind of material is said to be acceptable to Agni.

(nahi me'styaghnyā na svadhitirvananvati | athaitādṛg bharāmi te | V.19. yadagne kāni kāni cidā te dārūṇi dadhmasi | tā juṣasva yaviṣṭhya V.20. yadattyupajivhikā yadvamro ati sarpati | sarvaṁ tadastu te ghṛtaṁ V.21).

Hymns containing speculations regarding the different aspects of sacrifice apparently belong to this stage. Thus at III.54.5 (ko addhā veda ka iha pravocat devān acchā pathyā kā sameti), the path leading towards the gods is being investigated. There apparently was some mystery about the place of their residence (dadṛśra eṣā-mavamā sadāmsi pareṣu yā guhyeṣu vrateṣu) and hence the intervention of Agni was necessary. Thus the gods are referred to as 'agnijivhāh' at III.54.10. Here the importance of Agni in the sacrifice is sought to be justified.⁵⁰

Similarly compare IV.58, X.114 in chapter XI.

48. Cf. the knowledge of some specific form said to be essential at X.44.6 (chap. VI, XII and IX. 73.9)

49. Vide chap. III. p. 52

50. Cf. also III.55.3 p. 280

After the introduction of the Visvedevas in the sacrifice, it appears that the whole conception of divinity started undergoing a significant change. If the same sacrifice could propitiate them all, it was quite natural to look upon them as one divinity. It appears that when such speculations about the divinity came to be forwarded, there occurred a bifurcation of the class of the priests on the basis of the nature of the performance to be followed.

While the sacrifice was progressing during this stage, associating a number of priests in the sacrificial performance, it can be understood that all of them were not sufficiently intelligent to follow the spirit of the sacrifice as could be done by their ancestors or by some of their contemporaries. Such people, not having any insight into the sacrifice must have been concentrating on the mode or the technique of the performance, which they could follow more easily. It is therefore this aspect of the sacrifice that they came to emphasize. While the other class, inclined more and more towards the idea of a symbolic sacrifice, as could fit in with their intellectual pursuit of the idea of the divinity.⁵¹ They had not totally neglected the sacrificial performances as can be inferred from their description of the philosophical reality in terms of the sacrifice.⁵² But as they were looking upon the sacrifice more or less as a means, they would not emphasize any rigidity in its performance. It is this class of thinkers that came to emphasize the idea of devotion and introduce more abstract divinities in the Rġvedic pantheon.

It is thus that two distinct lines of thought have come into being and gradually become well-defined at the end of the Rġvedic period. The comparative neglect of the practical aspect of the sacrifice on the part of the thinker priests gave greater opportunity to the other class to stabilise their hold on that aspect and it is as a result of the predominance of this class that the composition of new hymns for the purposes of the sacrifice came to be discouraged. This marks the end of the third stage.

IV

The fourth stage is characterized by the transition to the brahmanical aspect of the sacrifice. After the composition of new hymns had ceased, the idea of collecting the older ones must have come into existence. This collection also has apparently spread over a pretty long stretch of time as can be inferred from the existence of in various strata in the hymns of the present Samhitā as indicated above (p.3 f.n.). It is during this period that the idea of employing the available hymns in a mechanical fashion must have arisen. During the period, when the compilation was finally completed, this idea has grown further and ultimately culminated in the thoroughly mechanical concept of the brahmanical sacrifice.

51. Vide chap. XIII. p. 274.

52. BV. XII 1951 (pp. 163-71). ASI Srinagar Circle, Jammu Collection.

Chapter Fifteen

AVABHRTHA—CONCLUDING REMARKS

पिपर्तु मा तदृतस्य प्रवाचनं देवानां यन्मनुष्या अमन्महि । (RV x. 35.8)

In the preceding pages, we have discussed the nature of the sacrifice in the R̥gveda, the circumstances under which it originated, the stages by which it developed and the influence it exercised on the life and ideas of the Aryans of that time.

The sphere of discussion has had its own limitations; but all the data concerning the sacrifice has been collected and presented so as to arrive at as full a picture of the R̥gvedic sacrifice as could be done. The analysis of the hymns of the R̥gveda as one chronological unit, has yielded a fairly good picture of the sacrifice as it then existed. There can be and will be a difference of opinion regarding the suggestion of a passage here and there. But after all, as it is very wisely suggested by a R̥gvedic poet, one should give an exposition with full consciousness of one's shortcomings as a human being (X.35.8 quoted in the beginning).

It will be realised that maximum advantage has been taken of the material made available after a close scrutiny of the hymns of the R̥gveda. All the sacrificial hymns and the similes however have not been discussed in detail, though care has been taken to see that the points of vital importance for the present topic have not been dropped.

The overall impression of the sacrifice that we thus secure is of an idea which has been very nobly conceived and developed for a pretty long stretch of time. Creation has been thought of in terms of the sacrifice; death is being looked upon in the light of the sacrifice; human life appears to be considered as permeated by the idea of the sacrifice. Sacrifice thus appears to have been considered as the very basis of life and it is for this reason that the R̥ta has come to be identified with the sacrifice.

It is thus that we can realise the reason why the author of the Gītā emphasized the idea of the sacrifice in his work as that idea has constituted the very foundation of the Aryan culture and has given a shape to the early Aryan society. The idea deteriorated in course of time mainly on account of the fact that the sacrifice came to be looked upon as a mere mechanism to produce certain specific results. The idea of divinity also deteriorated with it and the philosophical speculations received a set-back for the time being. The process of this mechanisation has already started during the last stage of the R̥gvedic sacrifice as we have seen above.

The next stage of the sacrifice can be determined in the light of the analysis of the Yajus and the Sāma Vedas and the comparison of the hymns therein with the hymns of the R̥gveda as well as the results presented above. The two Vedas apparently indicate a positive sacrificial bias of the literature and as such can give an indication as to why the hymns therein came to be so fashioned.

It is after this analysis that the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, as the one belonging to the R̥gveda Samhitā and also being one of the oldest brāhmaṇas will have to be compared with the results arrived at and thus we can get an idea how the mechanism of the sacrifice started its working and attained perfection thereafter. Comparison with the Brāhmaṇas of different chronological stratas and lastly the Śrauta sūtras will finally complete the picture of the sacrifice during its latest stages. This discussion would bring us to the period of the Gītā, which tried to give a distinctly ethical turn to the idea of the sacrifice. For various reasons this intellectual exposition of the idea of the sacrifice could not prevail for a long time. In the days that followed, the old brahmanic system of sacrifice was sought to be theorized and philosophised so as to give rise to a system of thought known as the 'Pūrvamīmāṃsā'.

This systematisation of the theory of the sacrifice marks an end of the idea of the sacrifice as it was conceived in the hymns of the R̥gveda.



वागर्पणं वाग्देविवर्गिग्नौ वाचया हुतम् ।
वाग्देवीमेव गन्तव्यं वाग्यज्ञं प्रविधत्सता ॥



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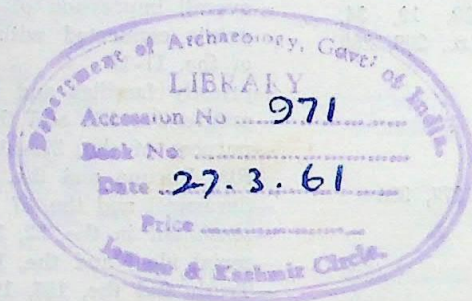
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